A NEW HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

FROM THE

DESCENT of the ROMANS,

TO THE

DEMISE of his late Majesty, GEORGE II.

INSCRIBED TO

His present Majesty, GEORGE III.

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HISTORY *is philosophy teaching by examples.*
Bolingbroke *from* Dion. Hall.

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JAMES I

Engrav'd for Rider's History of England

THE
History of ENGLAND.

BOOK XI.

Containing an account of the affairs of Great Britain, *from the union of the two crowns under* James I. *to the Revolution in* 1688. *including the ſpace of eighty-five Years.*

JAMES I. A. D. 1603.

AT the death of Elizabeth, the crown of England peaceably devolved to James the ſixth of Scotland. He was the great-grandſon of Margaret, eldeſt daughter of Henry the ſeventh, and, on

the failure of the male-line, his hereditary right remained indisputable. If the will of Henry the eighth, confirmed by act of parliament, had tacitly excluded the Scottish line, the tyranny and caprice of that monarch, had rendered his name so odious, that a settlement of this nature, unsupported by any just reason, was not likely to have any weight with the people. The queen too, with her dying breath, had acknowledged the title of her kinsman James, and the whole nation seemed ready to receive him with open arms.

As Elizabeth's reign had been extremely prosperous, she left the nation in such a flourishing condition, that her successor enjoyed every advantage, except that of comparison, with her illustrious name, when he ascended the throne of England. The king's journey from Edinburgh to London, immediately afforded to the inquisitive some circumstances of comparison, which, notwithstanding the partiality in favour of their new sovereign, they could not interpret to his advantage. As he passed along, all ranks of men crowded about him; allured by interest or curiosity.

Great were the rejoicings, and loud and hearty the acclamations, which resounded from

from all quarters; and every one could recollect with what affability, and complaisance, the queen was wont to behave amidst such concourse and exultation of her subjects. But James, though frank and familiar with his friends and courtiers, hated the bustle of a mixt multitude; and, though fond of flattery, he was still fonder of tranquillity and ease. He therefore published a proclamation, prohibiting this great resort of people, on pretence of the scarcity of provisions with which it would be attended.

He was not, however, insensible to these marks of affection discovered by his new subjects; and being himself of a grateful disposition, he seems to have been in haste to make them some return of kindness and good offices. To this motive it is, perhaps, that we ought to attribute that profusion of titles which took place in the beginning of his reign, when in six weeks time, after his entrance into the kingdom, he is supposed to have conferred the honour of knighthood on no less than two hundred and thirty-seven persons.

If Elizabeth's frugality of honours, as well as of money, had been formerly censured, it began now to be praised and com-

mended; and every one was sensible, that the king, by his lavish and premature bestowal of favours, had failed of obliging the persons to whom they were given. A pasquinade was affixed to St. Paul's, in which an art was promised to be taught, very necessary to assist frail memories, in retaining the names of the new nobility.

It is natural to think, that the English would have been less displeased with the king's facility in granting favours, had they been confined entirely to their own nation, and had not been shared out, in too unequal proportions, to his old subjects. James, who, during his whole reign, was more influenced by temper and inclination, than by the rules of policy and prudence, had brought with him great numbers of his Scottish courtiers, whose impatience and importunity were apt, in many cases, to abuse the easy nature of their master, and extort favours, with which, it is probable, his English subjects would not be satisfied. The duke of Lennox, the earl of Mar, the lord Hume, lord Kinloss, Sir George Hume, and secretary Elphinston, were immediately admitted into the English privy-council. Sir George Hume

Hume was created earl of Dunbar; Hay was dignified with the title first of viscount Doncaster, then of earl of Carlisle; and Ramsey was promoted to the earldom of Holderness.

It must be confessed, however, in justice to James, that he left almost all the chief offices in the hands of Elizabeth's ministers, and committed the management of political affairs, both foreign and domestic, to his English subjects. Among these, secretary Cecil, created successively lord Effindon, viscount Cranborne, and earl of Salisbury, was always considered as his prime minister and chief counsellor.

Though the talents and abilities of this minister were universally acknowledged, his favour with the king occasioned great surprize, on the accession of that monarch. Cecil was son of the famous Burleigh, whose merits towards his country and his sovereign were great; but whose name was naturally odious to James, as the avowed enemy of his mother, and the principal cause of her untimely end. He himself, as well as his father, had stood at the head of the court party, which opposed the power of the earl of Essex, and which, aided by the folly or rather frenzy of

of that favourite, at last brought him to the scaffold.

The people, who loved Essex, were extremely enraged at the conduct of his enemies; but still more James, who had carried on a secret correspondence with him, and considered him as a martyr to the Scottish succession. Sir Walter Raleigh, lord Grey, lord Cobham, Cecil's associates, felt immediately the effects of these prejudices of their master, and were deprived of their employments: but Cecil, who possessed all the art and cunning of a courtier, as well as many of the qualities of a great statesman, had found means of ingratiating himself with James; and without the knowledge either of the queen or of any of her ministers, had maintained a secret correspondence with her successor during the latter years of the queen's administration.

The capacity of James and his ministers in negociation was immediately put to the test, on the appearance of ambassadors from almost all the princes and states of Europe, in order to felicitate the king on his accession to the throne, and to conclude with him new treaties and alliances. Besides envoys from Venice, Denmark, and the Palatinate; Henry Frederic of Nassau, assisted by Barnevelt the pen-

penſionary, repreſented the States of the United Provinces. Aremberg was ſent by the archduke Albert; and Taxis was expected in a little time from Spain. But the perſon who attracted moſt the attention of the public, both on account of his own merit, and that of his maſter, was the marquis of Rhoni, afterwards duke of Sully, and prime miniſter to Henry the fourth of France.

This miniſter propoſed, in his maſter's name, a league with James, in conjunction with Venice, the United Provinces, and the northern crowns, in order to invade the Auſtrian dominions on every ſide, and humble the exorbitant power of that ambitious family. But the genius of the Engliſh king was little adapted to ſuch vaſt enterprizes. The love of peace was his ruling paſſion; and it was a fortunate circumſtance that the ſame object, which was ſo agreeable to his inclination, was, at the ſame time, equally advantageous to his people.

The French ambaſſador was therefore obliged to abandon his extenſive ſcheme, and to concert with James the means of providing for the ſafety of the United Provinces. A treaty was accordingly formed for that purpoſe, in which it was ſtipulated that

that the two kings ſhould permit the Dutch to levy forces in their reſpective dominions; and ſhould previouſly ſupply that republic with the ſum of one million, four hundred thouſand livres a year, for the maintenance of their forces: that the whole ſum ſhould be advanced by the king of France; but that the third part ſhould be deducted from a debt due by him to Elizabeth: and if the Spaniards attacked either of the princes, they engaged to aſſiſt each other; Henry with a force of ten thouſand, James with that of ſix thouſand men.

Amidſt the profound tranquillity, both foreign and domeſtic, which the nation now enjoyed, nothing could be more ſurpriſing than the diſcovery of a plot to over-turn the government, and to place on the throne of England lady Arabella Stuart, a near kinſwoman of the king, and deſcended equally from Henry the ſeventh. Every thing remains ſtill myſterious in this conſpiracy; nor can hiſtory furniſh us with any clue to unravel it.

Watſon and Clarke, two Catholic prieſts, were accuſed of the plot; as were likewiſe lord Grey, a puritan; lord Cobham, a thoughtleſs man of no fixed principle; and Sir Walter Raleigh, ſuppoſed to be of that phi-

philoſophical ſect, who were then extremely rare in England, and who have ſince obtained the name of Free-Thinkers. In the ſame deſign was ſaid to be concerned, Mr. Broke, brother to lord Cobham, Sir Griffin Markham, Mr. Coplay, and Sir Edward Parham.

What bond could unite men of ſuch different principles in ſo dangerous a combination, what end they propoſed, or by what means they intended to accompliſh their purpoſe, has never yet been explained, and cannot eaſily be conjectured. As Raleigh, Grey, and Cobham were generally believed, after the queen's death, to have oppoſed proclaiming the king, till conditions ſhould be ſettled with him; they were upon that, as well as other accounts, extremely obnoxious to the court and miniſtry; and ſome ſuſpicions were at firſt entertained, that the plot was merely a contrivance of ſecretary Cecil, in order to rid himſelf of his old friends, who were become his moſt inveterate enemies. But the confeſſion as well as trial of the criminals, put the matter beyond all doubt.

The two prieſts and Broke were executed; Cobham, Grey and Markham were pardoned, after they had laid their heads upon the block;

block; Raleigh received a reprieve, but not a pardon, and he remained in prison many years after. We learn from Sully's Memoirs, that Raleigh secretly offered his services to the French ambassador; and, we may thence presume, that meeting with a repulse from that quarter, he made the like unwarrantable proposal to the Flemish minister.

Such a conjecture we are now enabled to form; but it must be acknowledged, that on his trial there appeared no proof of this transaction, nor indeed any circumstance which could justify his condemnation. He was impeached by Cobham alone, in a sudden fit of passion, upon hearing that Raleigh, when examined, had discovered some circumstances by which Cobham's guilt was fully demonstrated.

This accusation Cobham afterwards retracted, and soon after retracted this retraction: yet upon the written evidence of this single witness, a man of no veracity, no principle, and so contradictory in his testimony; not confronted with Raleigh; not supported by any concurring circumstance; was that great man, in violation of all law and equity, found guilty by the jury.

The next occuptation of the king was equally agreeable to his inclination, and ſuited to his capacity. He was now employed in dictating magiſterially to an aſſembly of divines concerning points of faith and diſcipline, and in receiving the applauſes of theſe eccleſiaſtics for his ſuperior zeal and learning. The religious controverſies between the church and the Puritans, had obliged him to call a conference at Hampton-Court, in order, if poſſible, to find expedients for accomodating the difference between the two parties.*

The Puritans had, by this time, become ſo numerous in England, that no leſs than ſeven hundred and fifty clergymen of that ſect preſented a petition to the king on his acceſſion; and many more ſeemed willing to adhere to it.

They flattered themſelves, that James, having received his education in Scotland, and having ever profeſſed a ſincere attachment to the church eſtabliſhed there, would at leaſt mitigate the ſeverity of the laws exacted againſt Puritans; if he did not ſhew them more particular grace and encouragement.

* A. D. 1604.

But the king's diſpoſition had lately taken a contrary turn. The more he knew the puritanical clergy, the leſs favour he bore them. He had obſerved in their Scotiſh brethren, a ſtrong propenſity towards republicaniſm, and a violent averſion to monarchy; and he therefore reſolved to exert his utmoſt endeavours to prevent the growth of theſe principles in England.

The church of England had not yet abandoned the rigid doctrines of grace and predeſtination: the Puritans had not yet totally ſeparated themſelves from the church, nor openly renounced epiſcopacy. Though the ſpirit of the parties was conſiderably different, the only viſible ſubjects of diſpute were concerning the croſs in baptiſm, the ring in marriage, the uſe of the ſurplice, and bowing at the name of Jeſus.

Such were the queſtions which were ſolemnly diſcuſſed in the conference at Hampton-Court, between ſome biſhops and dignified clergymen on the one hand, and ſome leaders of the Puritan party on the other; the king and his miniſters being preſent.

The Puritans alledged, that his majeſty was, by no means, a candid and impartial judge; but was ſtrongly prepoſſeſſed in favour of their opponents. James, it muſt be owned,

owned, from the beginning of the conference, diſcovered a zealous attachment to the eſtabliſhed church, and frequently inculcated a maxim, which, though it has ſome foundation, ought yet to be received with great limitations, *no biſhop, no king*.

The biſhops and courtiers, in their turn, did not fail to load the royal diſputant with the moſt fulſome and extravagant praiſes. The chancellor Egerton declared, "that he had often heard that the prieſthood "and royalty were united; but never ſaw "it verified till the preſent occaſion." The archbiſhop of Canterbury carried his flattery ſtill higher, and ſaid, "that undoubt-"edly his majeſty ſpoke from the imme-"diate inſpiration of the holy ghoſt." A few alterations were made in the liturgy, and both parties ſeparated with mutual diſſatisfaction.

The Puritanical clergy had frequently been wont to form together certain aſſemblies, which they called propheſyings; where they indulged themſelves in the moſt rapturous flights of devotion, and, by their mutual prayers and exhortations, inflamed each other with the higheſt degree of enthuſiam. Theſe dangerous ſocieties had been ſuppreſſed by Elizabeth; and the miniſters,

in this conference, petitioned the king for their revival.

But James ſharply replied, " if you aim " at a Scottiſh Preſbytery, it agrees as well " with monarchy, as God and the Devil. " There, Jack and Tom, and Will and Dick, " ſhall meet and cenſure me and my coun- " cil. Therefore, I reiterate my former " ſpeech. *Le roi s'aviſera.* Stay, I pray, " for one ſeven years before you demand; " and then, if you find me grow fat and " purſie I may perchance hearken unto you. " For that government will keep me in " breath, and give me work enough." Such were the political conſiderations which induced the king to reject the petition of the Puritans.

The next aſſembly, in which James diſplayed his talents, was one that diſcovered ſome more ſpirit of libety than what appeared among the biſhops and clergy. The parliament was now ready to aſſemble; being ſo long delayed, on account of the plague, which had broke out in London, and raged with ſuch uncommon violence, that, in the courſe of one year, it carried off no leſs than thirty thouſand perſons, though the city at that time contained only about one hundred and fifty thouſand inhabitants.

The

The ſpeech which the king made on the opening of the ſeſſion, exhibits a ſtriking picture of his character, and ſhows that he was poſſeſſed of more knowledge, and greater parts, than prudence or any juſt ſenſe of propriety and decorum.

Though this ſpeech is equal, if not ſuperior, to moſt productions of the age, as well in ſtile as in matter, it wants that majeſtic brevity, which becomes a king in his addreſſes to the great council of the nation. It contains, however, ſome excellent maxims; and, among others, the following noble paſſage, which deſerves to be engraved in the heart of every Britiſh monarch.

"When," ſays he, "I have done all "that I can for you, I do nothing but "that which I am bound to do, and am "accountable to God, ſhould I do the "contrary; for I acknowledge, that the "greateſt and moſt eſſential difference be"tween a rightful king and an uſurping "tyrant, is this; that whereas the proud "and ambitious tyrant doth think, that his "kingdom and people are only ordained "for the gratification of his deſires and "unreaſonable appetites; the righteous "and juſt king doth, on the contrary, ac"knowledge, that he himſelf is only or-

" dained for the promoting the wealth and " proſperity of his people, and that his " greateſt and principal happineſs muſt " conſiſt in their proſperity. If you be " rich, I cannot be poor; if you be happy, " I cannot be unfortunate: and I proteſt, " that your welfare ſhall be the conſtant " object of my ſtudy and attention. That " I am a ſervant is moſt true; and that as I " am head and governour of all the people " in my dominions, conſidering them in " number, and in different ranks; ſo if we " will take the people as one body and " maſs, then as the head is ordained for " the body, and not the body for the head, " ſo muſt a righteous king acknowledge " himſelf to be ordained for his people, " and not his people for him: for although " a king and people be relative, yet can he " be no king if he want people and ſub- " jects. But there be many people in " the world, that want a king: wherefore I " will never be aſhamed to confeſs it my " principal honour to be the great ſervant " of the commonwealth, and ever think " the proſperity thereof to be my greateſt " felicity, as I have already obſerved."

Happy had it been for James, and his poſterity, had they always followed theſe maxims; and happy will it be for all ſucceeding

ceeding monarchs of England to make them the invariable rule of their conduct, as they can never depart from them without endangering that authority, with which the laws, for wiſe and good purpoſes, have thought proper to inveſt them.

It was not long, however, before it appeared, that James's practice was very different from his principles. When he iſſued writs for ſummoning the parliament, he publiſhed a proclamation, in which he enjoined his ſubjects not to chuſe any outlaw for their repreſentative. And he adds; "If "any perſon take upon him the place of "knight, citizen, or burgeſs, not being "duly elected, according to the laws and "ſtatues in that behalf provided, and ac"cording to the purport, effect, and true "meaning of this our proclamation, then "every perſon ſo offending, to be fined or "impriſoned for the ſame."

A proclamation here was plainly ſuppoſed to be of the ſame force with a law, and that in ſo nice a point as the right of election: moſt alarming circumſtances! had there not been reaſon to think, that this ſtep, being taken ſo early in the king's reign, was rather owing to hurry and precipitation, than to any ſettled deſign of invading the privileges of parliament.

Sir

Sir Francis Goodwin was elected member for the county of Bucks; and his return, as usual, was made into Chancery. The chancellor, declaring him an outlaw, vacated his seat, and issued writs for a new election. Sir John Forteſcue was choſen in his place; but the firſt act of the houſe was to annul the chancellor's ſentence and reſtore Sir Francis to his ſeat. At the king's requeſt, the lords deſired a conference on this ſubject; but the commons gave them a flat refuſal, as the queſtion related entirely to their own privileges.

They agreed, however, to preſent an addreſs to the king by the mouth of their ſpeaker; where they affirmed, that, though the returns were by form made into Chancery, yet the ſole right of determing the validity of elections, belonged to the houſe itſelf, not to the chancellor.

James was not ſatisfied, and ordered a conference between the houſe and the judges, whoſe opinion in this caſe was different from that of the commons. This conference, he ſaid, he commanded as an "abſolute king:" an epithet, we may believe, not very agreeable to Engliſh ears, and which they had never before been accuſtomed to hear ſo openly aſſerted.

The

The commons were alarmed at this arbitary ſtrain; and they now began to perceive the conſequences of that power, which had been aſſumed by the chancellor, and to which their predeceſſors had, in ſome inſtances, blindly ſubmitted.

"By this courſe" ſaid a member, "the "free elections of the counties is taken "away, and none ſhall be choſen but ſuch "as the king and council ſhall think pro-"per. Let us, therefore, with fortitude, "underſtanding, and ſincerity, endeavour "to maintain our privilege. This cannot "be conſtrued any contempt in us, but, a "maintenance of our common rights, "which our anceſtors have left us, and "which it is juſt and fit for us to tranſmit "to our poſterity." Another ſaid, "this "may be called a *quo warranto*, to ſeize all "our liberties." "A chancellor," added a third, "by this courſe may call a parli-"ament, conſiſting of what perſons he "pleaſes. Any ſuggeſtion, by any perſon, "may be the cauſe of ſending a new writ. "It is come to this plain queſtion, "whether the chancery or parliament "ought to have authority."

Notwithſtanding this jealous ſpirit of liberty, which now appeared in the commons, their reſpect for majeſty was ſo great,

great, that they named a committee to confer with the judges before the king and council. There the queſtion of law began to appear, in James's eyes, a little more doubtful than he had hitherto conceived it; and, in order to ſave his honour, he propoſed, that both Goodwin and Forteſcue ſhould be ſet aſide, and a new writ be iſſued, by warrant of the houſe, for electing another member.

The commons agreed to the propoſal; but in ſuch a manner, that while they diſcovered their regard for the king, they ſecured, for the future, the free poſſeſſion of their ſeats, and the ſole right of judging in their own elections and returns. At the ſame time, they eſtabliſhed in the caſe of Sir Thomas Shirly, their power of puniſhing, as well the perſons at whoſe ſuit any member is arreſted, as the officers who arreſt and detain them.

The principal affair which was brought before this parliament was the union of the two kingdoms; a meaſure, which James recommended with the utmoſt zeal and earneſtneſs. He juſtly conſidered it as the peculiar felicity of his reign, that he had put an end to the bloody animoſities between theſe hoſtile nations, and had reduced the whole iſland under the ſame empire; bleſſed with the moſt perfect domeſtic tranquillity, and effec-

effectually secured against all foreign invasions.

He flattered himself, that while his subjects of both kingdoms reflected on past calamities, besides esteeming his person to be infinitely precious, they would entertain the strongest desire of preventing the return of like misfortunes, by an intimate union of laws, parliaments, and privileges. He forgot that this very reflection produced, as yet, a contrary effect; and kept alive that mutual hatred between the nations, which had been carried to the greatest extremity, and required time to allay it.

The more anxious the king appeared to accomplish this salutary work, the more unwilling was the English parliament to assent to the proposal; while they ascribed his excessive zeal to that partiality, in favour of his ancient subjects, of which, they thought, that, on other occasions, they had reason to complain.

Nevertheless, that they might not disgust their new sovereign, by a flat refusal, they agreed to appoint forty-four English to meet with thirty-one Scottish commissioners, in order to deliberate concerning the terms of an union; but without any power to bring the matter to a final conclusion.

The

The commons diſcovered the ſame ſpirit of independence, when the queſtion of ſupply was brought before them, by ſome members, who were attached to the court.

In vain was it alledged, that, though the king had received a ſupply, which had been voted to Elizabeth, and which had not been collected before her death; yet he found it loaded with a debt, which had been contracted by the queen, equal to its whole produce: that peace was not yet thoroughly eſtabliſhed with Spain, and that Ireland was ſtill expenſive to him: that his own journey from Scotland, as well as that of the queen and royal family, amidſt ſuch an immenſe concourſe of people, had been attended with conſiderable charges: and that, as the courtiers hoped for greater liberalities from the prince on his acceſſion, and had impoſed on his generous nature; ſo the prince would expect, at the beginning, ſome mark of duty and affection from his people, and ſome conſideration of his neceſſities. The commons lent a deaf ear to all theſe remonſtrances: and the majority ſeemed fully determined to refuſe all ſupply.

James, being informed of their refractory diſpoſition, reſolved, in ſome meaſure, to prevent a diſappointment, which might be liable to a bad conſtruction, both at home and

and abroad. He therefore ſent a meſſage to the houſe, acquainting them, that he deſired no ſupply; and he was very forward in refuſing what was never offered him.

This ſummer the peace with Spain was finally concluded, and was ſigned at London, by the Spaniſh miniſters, on the eighteenth day of Auguſt. The conſtable of Caſtile came into England, to ratify the treaty; and, on the part of England, the earl of Hertford was diſpatched into the Low Countries for the ſame purpoſe, and the earl of Nottingham, lord high admiral, into Spain.

The latter was attended with a numerous train of gentlemen; and the Spaniards, it is ſaid, were greatly ſurprized, when they beheld the blooming countenances and graceful appearance of the Engliſh, whom they had hitherto been taught to conſider as ſo many monſters and infernal demons.

In this tranſaction, there is one circumſtance which ſtrongly marks the character of James, and diſcovers the high notion which he entertained of his own power and the extent of the roval prerogative. Immediately after his acceſſion to the throne of England, before any terms of peace were adjuſted, or even propoſed by Spain, he recalled all the

ters of marque which had been granted by queen Elizabeth.

In his proclamation for this purpose, he plainly supposes, that, as he himself, while king of Scotland, had always lived in friendship with Spain, peace was attached to his person; and that merely by his accession, without any articles of treaty or agreement, he had finished the war between the two kingdoms.

This ignorance of the law of nations, might appear surprizing in a prince who was thirty-six years of age, and who had reigned from his infancy, did we not consider that a king of Scotland, who lived in perfect amity with England, had few transactions to manage with foreign nations, and had little opportuniy of acquiring experience.

Unhappily for James, his pusillanimity, his prejudices, his indolence, his love of amusement, particularly of hunting, of which he was remarkably fond, ever hindred him from making any progress in the knowledge or practice of foreign politics, and in a little time diminished that regard, which all the neigbouring nations had paid to England, during the reign of his predecessor.

Amidst

Amidſt the profound tranquillity which now reigned in the kingdom, the people were ſurprized with the diſcovery of a plot; one of the moſt daring and impious that occurs in the annals of mankind.* This was no other than the gun-powder treaſon, by which the conſpirators propoſed to blow up the king, the royal family, and both houſes of parliament; and involve them all in utter and inevitable ruin.

The Roman Catholics had hoped for great favour and indulgence on the acceſſion of James, both as he was deſcended from Mary, who had ſacrificed her life for their intereſt, and as he himſelf, in his early youth, was ſuppoſed to have ſhewn ſome partiality towards them; which nothing, they imagined, but prudence or neceſſity had ſince reſtrained.

It is alledged, that he had even given a poſitive promiſe to tolerate their religion, ſo ſoon as he ſhould aſcend the throne of England; whether their credulity had interpreted in this ſenſe ſome obliging expreſſions of the king, or that he had made uſe of ſuch an artifice, in order to render them favourable to his title does not appear.

* A. D. 1605.

It was not long, however, before they were convinced of their miſtake; and they were at once ſurprized and enraged to hear, that James was firmly reſolved to execute the laws enacted againſt them, and to perſiſt invariably in all the rigorous meaſures of Elizabeth.

Cateſby, a gentleman of good parts and of an ancient family, firſt deviſed a moſt extraordinary method of revenge; and he communicated his intention to Piercy, a deſcendant of the illuſtrious houſe of Northumberland.

In one of their converſations concerning the diſtreſſed ſituation of the Catholics, Piercy, having fallen into a violent paſſion, and hinted the aſſaſſination of the king; Cateſby took the opportunity of diſcloſing to him a nobler and more extenſive plan of treaſon, which not only included a ſure execution of vengeance, but afforded ſome hopes of re-eſtabliſhing the Catholic religion in England.

"In vain," ſaid he, "would you de-
"ſtroy the king's life: he has children,
"who would ſucceed him, both in his
"throne, and in his maxims of govern-
"ment. In vain would you annihilate the
"whole royal family: the nobility, the
"gentry, the parliament, are all infected
"with

" with the ſame hereſy, and could raiſe
" to the throne another prince, and an-
" other family, who, beſides their hatred
" to our religion, would be actuated by
" revenge for the tragical death of their
" predeceſſors. To anſwer our end effec-
" tually, we muſt cut off, at one blow, the
" king, the royal family, the lords, the
" commons; and bury all our enemies in
" one common and undiſtinguiſhed ruin.
" Happily, they are all convened on the
" firſt meeting of the parliament, and fur-
" niſh us with the means of a glorious and
" uſeful vengeance. Great preparations
" will not be neceſſary. A few of us,
" uniting our endeavours, may run a mine
" below the hall in which they aſſemble,
" and, chooſing the very moment when
" the king delivers his ſpeech to both
" houſes, conſign over to deſtruction theſe
" determined foes to all piety and reli-
" gion."

Piercy approved of this project of Cateſby; and they reſolved to impart the matter to a few more; and, among the reſt, to Thomas Winter, whom they diſpatched into Flanders, in queſt of Fawkes, an officer in the Spaniſh ſervice, on whoſe zeal and courage they could ſafely depend. When they admitted any new conſpirator, in order

to oblige him to ſecreſy, they always, together with an oath, made uſe of the ſacrament, the moſt ſacred rite of their religion: and 'tis obſervable, that no one of theſe pious devotees ever entertained the leaſt ſcruple with regard to the cruel maſſacre which they projected, of all that was great and eminent in the nation.

Some of them only were alarmed at the thought, that, of neceſſity, many Catholics muſt be preſent; either as ſpectators, or attendants on the king, or as having ſeats in the houſe of lords: but Teſmond, a jeſuit, and Garnet, ſuperior of that order in England, ſoon ſilenced theſe doubts, and convinced them that the intereſts of religion required, that the innocent muſt here be ſacrificed with the guilty.

All this happened in the ſpring and ſummer of the year 1604; when the conſpirators likewiſe hired a houſe in Piercy's name, adjoining to that in which the parliament was to meet. Towards the end of that year they began their operations.

That they might not be interrupted in their work, nor give any ſuſpicion to the neighbourhood, they carried along with them ſtore of proviſions, and never intermitted their labour. Reſolute in their purpoſe, and prompted by paſſion, by principle,

ple, and by mutual exhortation, they disdained death in comparison of a disappointment; and, having furnished themselves with arms, together with the instruments of their labour, they determined to perish in case of a discovery.

They prosecuted their work with such unwearied labour and application, that they soon pierced the wall, though three yards in thickness; but on approaching the other side, they were alarmed with a noise, for which they knew not how to account. Upon enquiry, they found that it proceeded from a vault below the house of lords; that a magazine of coals had been kept there; and that, as the coals were selling off, the vault would be let to the highest bidder.

The opportunity was immediately seized; the place hired by Piercy; thirty-six barrels of gun-powder deposited in it; the whole concealed with faggots and billets: the doors of the cellar boldly thrown open; and every body allowed access, as if it contained nothing dangerous or unusual.

Assured of success, they now began to extend their views, and to concert the remaining part of their project. The king, the queen, and prince Henry, were all expected to be present at the opening of the par-

parliament. The duke, by reaſon of his tender age, would, in all probability, be abſent; and it was determined that Piercy ſhould either ſeize or aſſaſſinate him.

The princeſs Elizabeth, a child likewiſe, lived at lord Harrington's houſe in Warwickſhire; and Sir Everard Digby, Rookwood, and Grant, being admitted into the ſecret, undertook to aſſemble their friends, under pretence of hunting, and, ſeizing that princeſs, immediately to proclaim her queen.

The day, ſo long and ſo ardently expected, now approached, on which the parliament was appointed to meet. The fatal ſecret, though imparted to above twenty perſons, had been religiouſly kept, during the ſpace of near a year and a half. No remorſe, no pity, no fear of puniſhment, no hope of reward, had, as yet, induced any one conſpirator, either to relinquiſh the enterprize, or to publiſh it to the world. The fire of enthuſiaſm had extinguiſhed in their breaſt every other ſentiment; and it was an imprudence at laſt, ariſing from theſe very bigotted prejudices, which ſaved the nation from utter ruin.

Ten days before the meeting of the parliament, lord Monteagle, a Catholic, ſon to lord Morley, received the following letter,

ter, which had been put into the hands of his ſervant, by a perſon unknown.

"My lord, out of the love I bear to "ſome of your friends, I have a care of "your preſervation. Therefore I would "adviſe you, as you tender your life, to "deviſe ſome excuſe to ſhift off your at- "tendance at this parliament. For God "and man have concurred to puniſh the "wickedneſs of this time. And think not "ſlightly of this advertiſement; but retire "yourſelf into your country, where you "may expect the event in ſafety. For "though there be no appearance of any "ſtir, yet, I ſay, they ſhall receive a ter- "rible blow, this parliament; and yet "they ſhall not know who hurts them. "This council is not to be contemned, be- "cauſe it may do you good, and can do "you no harm: for the danger is paſt, as "ſoon as you have burned the letter. And "I hope God will give you the grace to "make a good uſe of it, to whoſe holy "protection I commit you."

Monteagle was rather puzzled than alarmed at this letter; and, though inclined to think it a waggiſh contrivance to frighten and ridicule him, he judged it moſt adviſeable to ſhow it to lord Saliſbury, ſecretary of ſtate. Though Saliſbury was of the ſame opinion

opinion with Monteagle, he thought proper to lay it before the king, who came to town a few days after.

To James, who was naturally timorous and apprehenſive, it appeared in a very different light; and, from the ſerious and earneſt ſtile of the letter, he imagined that it implied ſomething extremely dangerous and important. "A terrible blow," and yet "the authors concealed;" a danger ſo "ſud-"den," and yet ſo "great:" theſe circumſtances ſeemed all to denote ſome contrivance by gun-powder; and it was thought prudent to examine all the vaults below the houſes of parliament.

This was the office of the earl of Suffolk, lord chamberlain; who purpoſely delayed the ſearch till the day before the meeting of the parliament. On entering the vault he obſerved thoſe great piles of wood and faggots which lay under the houſe of lords; and he caſt his eyes on Fawkes, who ſtood in a dark corner, and pretended to be a ſervant of Piercy's.

That daring and undaunted courage which ſo much diſtinguiſhed this conſpirator, even among thoſe heroes in villainy, was ſtrongly painted in his countenance, and was careſully remarked by the lord chamberlain. Such a quantity of fuel too, for

for the uſe of one who reſided ſo little in town as Piercy, appeared ſomewhat extraordinary; and, upon comparing all circumſtances, it was determined to make a more thorough ſcrutiny,

About midnight, Sir Thomas Knevet, a juſtice of peace, was ſent with a proper guard; and, before the door of the vault, finding Fawkes, who had juſt compleated his preparations, he immediately ſeized him, and, removing the faggots, diſcovered the powder. The matches, and every thing proper for firing the train, were found in Fawkes's pocket; who, ſeeing his guilt now apparent, and conſcious that he had no hopes of mercy, expreſſed the utmoſt regret that he had not at once ſet fire to the powder, and ſweetened his own death, by that of his enemies.

Before the council he diſcovered the ſame determined courage, mixed even with ſcorn and diſdain; refuſing to diſcover his aſſociates, and ſhewing no concern but for the miſcarriage of the enterprize. This obſtinacy continued for two or three days: but being impriſoned in the Tower, left to reflect on his guilt and danger, and the rack being juſt ſhown to him; his courage, exhauſted by ſo long an effort, and unſupported by hope or ſociety, at laſt failed him; and

and he made a full diſcovery of the whole plot.

Cateſby, Piercy, and the other conſpirators in London, were no ſooner informed of this event, than they haſtened away to Warwickſhire; where Sir Everard Digby, imagining that their ſcheme had ſucceeded, was already in arms, in order to ſeize the princeſs Elizabeth. She had made her eſcape into Coventry; and they were obliged to take refuge in Holbeck, the ſeat of Sir Stephen Littleton, on the borders of Staffordſhire.

The conſpirators, with all their attendants, never amounted to the number of an hundred perſons; and, being encompaſſed, on all hands, by the militia of the county, could no longer entertain hopes, either of eſcaping or prevailing. Having therefore confeſſed themſelves, and received abſolution, they boldly prepared for death; and determined to ſell their lives as dear as poſſible to the aſſailants. But even this miſerable conſolation was denied them; ſome of their powder took fire, and rendred them incapable of defence. The people ruſhed in upon them. Piercy and Cateſby were killed with one ſhot. Digby, Rookwood, Winter, and others, being taken priſoners, were tried, acknowledged their guilt,

guilt, and died, as well as Garnet, by the hands of the executioner. Notwithſtanding this atrocious crime, the bigotted Catholics were ſo devoted to Garnet, that they believed miracles were wrought by his blood; and, in Spain, he was conſidered as a martyr.

The lords Mordaunt and Sturton, two Catholics, were fined, the former ten thouſand pounds, the latter four thouſand, by the Star-chamber; becauſe their abſence from parliament had occaſioned a ſuſpicion of their being privy to the plot,

The earl of Northumberland was fined thirty thouſand pounds, becauſe, among other grounds of ſuſpicion, he had admitted Piercy into the band of gentlemen penſioners, without exacting from him the cuſtomary oaths.

The king, in his ſpeech to the parliament, obſerved, that though religion had induced the conſpirators to undertake ſo wicked an attempt, yet ought we not to accuſe all the Roman Catholics of the ſame crime, or ſuppoſe them equally capable of committing ſuch enormous barbarities. Many holy men, he ſaid, and our anceſtors among the reſt, had been ſeduced to agree with that church in her ſcholaſtic doctrines; who yet had never approved of her ſeditious principles

concerning the pope's power of depoſing kings, or juſtifying aſſaſſination. The wrath of heaven is denounced againſt crimes, but innocent error may obtain its favour; and nothing can be more odious than the uncharitable diſpoſition of the Puritans, who condemn alike to eternal flames, even the moſt inoffenſive proſelytes to Popery. For his part, he added, that conſpiracy, however deteſtable, ſhould never make him change, in the leaſt, his plan of goverment: while, with one hand, he chaſtized the guilty; with the other, he would ſtill ſupport and protect the innocent. After this ſpeech, he prorogued the parliament till the twenty-ſecond day of January.*

At that time, the commons granted his majeſty an aid of there ſubſidies and ſix fifteenths, which, Sir Francis Bacon ſaid in the houſe, might amount to about four hundred thouſand pounds. The hatred which the Catholics ſeemed to bear him, rendered his perſon more precious in the eyes of the people. The only point in which the commons gave him any diſguſt, was by diſcovering their conſtant attachment to the Puritans, in whoſe favour they applied for a con-

* A. D. 1606.

conference with the lords; which, however, they could not obtain.

The aid, voted by parliament, was payable in four years; and the king's prodigality, added to the neceſſary charges of government, had already anticipated the greateſt part of this ſupply, and diſpoſed him, in a ſhort time, to ſquander away the reſt of it among his friends and courtiers. To encreaſe ſtill farther his expences, his brother-in-law, the king of Denmark, paid him a viſit this ſummer; and the whole court was engaged in feaſting and revelry, in maſques and interludes

The principal affair diſcuſſed in the next ſeſſion, was the projected union of the two kingdoms. Nothing could exceed the king's paſſion and zeal for this noble enterprize, but the parliament's antipathy and averſion to it.

There remain two excellent ſpeeches in favour of the union; that of the king, and that of Sir Francis Bacon: and, notwithſtanding the contemptible opinion which ſome people entertain of James's abilities, it may ſafely be affirmed, that his diſcourſe, both for ſtrength of reaſoning, and elegance of compoſition, is little inferior to that of a man, who was undoubtedly, at that time, one of the greateſt geniuſes in Europe.

No arguments, however, could over-come the reluctance of the commons, who ſeemed chiefly to have been actuated by the vulgar motive of national hatred, They ſtill continued to perſiſt in their predjudices; and all the efforts, for a thorough incorporation, terminated only in the abolition of the hoſtile laws which had formerly been enacted between the kingdoms.

Some imprudent ſteps, which the king, a little after his acceſſion, had taken, in order to forward his favourite project, had here been found to do more injury than ſervice.

From his own authority, he had aſſumed the title of king of Great-Britain; and had quartered the arms of Scotland with thoſe of England, in all coins, flags, and enſigns: he had perſuaded the judges to give it as their opinion, that all thoſe, who, after the union of the two crowns, ſhould be born in either kingdom, were, for that reaſon alone, naturalized in both.

This was a nice and delicate queſtion, and, according to the ideas of thoſe times, ſuſceptible of ſubtile reaſoning on either ſide. The king was the ſame: the parliaments were different. To render the people therefore the ſame, we muſt ſuppoſe, that the ſovereign authority is lodged in the prince, and

and that theſe popular aſſemblies are rather intended to aſſiſt with money and advice, then poſſeſſed of any active or controuling power in the goverment; a maxim, which, however deſirous James might be to eſtabliſh it, it is not likely that the Engliſh would be very willing to admit.

A motion was made in the houſe of commons for a more ſtrict execution of the laws againſt Popiſh recuſants, and a mitigation of thoſe enacted againſt Proteſtants nonconformiſts. Both theſe points were equally diſagreeable to the king; and he ſent orders to the houſe, to deſiſt from any farther enquiry into that matter. The houſe were diſpoſed, at firſt, to conſider theſe orders as a breach of priviledge; but they ſoon ſubmitted, when told, that this meaſure of the king was countenanced by many precedents, during the reign of Elizabeth.

The buſineſs of the commons was now become ſo complicated and important, that, in conſequence of a propoſal of Sir Edwin Sandys, a member of great influence, they entered, for the firſt time, an order for the regular keeping of their journals. Towards the end of June,* the king prorogued the parliament.

* A. D. 1607.

About this time, there happened an insurrection of the country people in Northamptonshire, headed by one Reynolds, a man of low condition. They went about demolishing inclosures; but carefully abstained from every other outrage. This insurrection was easily suppressed; and though great clemency was shown to the insurgents, some of the ringleaders were capitally punished.

The chief cause of that trivial commotion, seems in itself to have been of a very important nature. It was become the usual practice in England to neglect tillage, and convert the land into pasture, which was found to turn to better account. By this means, the number of people was considerably diminished, or, at least, prevented from encreasing to such a degree, as, from the daily encrease of industry and commerce, might naturally have been expected.

Next year * presents us with nothing remarkable, but in the spring of the subsequent one,† after a long negotiation, was concluded, by a truce of twelve years, under the guarantee of France and England, that war, which, for near half a century, had been prosecuted between Spain and the states of the United Provinces.

Never

* A. D. 1608. † A. D. 1609.

Never conteſt ſeemed, at firſt, more unequal: never conteſt was terminated with more honour to the weaker party. Spain was poſſeſſed of numbers, wealth, authority, and diſcipline: the revolted provinces were animated by an inextinguiſhable love of civil and religious liberty. By her naval atchievements, the Republic ſupported her armies; and, uniting peaceful induſtry with military bravery, ſhe was enabled, by her own force, to defend herſelf, and gradually to depend leſs on thoſe neighbouring princes, who, from jealouſy to Spain, were, at firſt, induced to afford her aſſiſtance.

Long had the pride of that monarchy prevailed over her intereſt, and hindered her from liſtning to any propoſals of peace with her rebellious ſubjects. But finding her trade entirely ruined, and her provinces expoſed to the moſt imminent danger from the maritime force of the ſtates, ſhe at laſt conſented to acknowledge them for a free people, and ſolemnly to relinquiſh all claim and pretenſion to their ſovereignty.

The neutrality, which James obſerved with regard to foreign affairs, render the domeſtic tranſactions, particularly thoſe of parliament, the moſt intereſting of his reign. A new ſeſſion was held this ſpring; * the king, deſirous

* A. D. 1610.

ſirous of obtaining a ſupply, the commons determined to circumſcribe his exorbitant prerogative.

The earl of Saliſbury, now appointed treaſurer, on the death of the earl of Dorſet, explained the king's neceſſities, firſt to the peers, then to a committee of the lower houſe. He repreſented the great expences of ſupporting the navy, and of ſuppreſſing a late inſurrection in Ireland: he took notice of three numerous courts, which the king was obliged to maintain, for himſelf, for the queen, and for the prince of Wales: he alledged, that queen Elizabeth, though a ſingle woman, had received very large ſupplies, in the latter years of her life, which alone were expenſive to her: and he affirmed, that, during her reign, ſhe had made great dilapidations of the crown lands; an expedient, which, though it ſupplied her preſent wants, without burthening her people, encreaſed extremely the neceſſities of her ſucceſſor. From all theſe cauſes he thought it nowiſe ſurpriſing, that the king's revenue ſhould fall ſhort ſo great a ſum as eighty-one thouſand pounds of his ſtated and regular expences; without mentioning contengencies, which ought always to be reckoned at a fourth of the yearly charges. And as the crown was, at preſent, loaded with

with a great and urgent debt of three hundred thouſand pounds, he thence inferred the abſolute neceſſity of a large and immediate ſupply from the people.

To all theſe arguments, which James likewiſe inforced in a ſpeech from the throne, the commons remained inexorable. But not to affront the king, by an abſolute refuſal, they voted him one ſubſidy and one fifteenth; which would hardly amount to one hundred thouſand pounds. The commons, no doubt, thought, that as the nation enjoyed a profound tranquillity within itſelf, and was at peace with all the world, the king could have no occaſion for thoſe extraordinary ſupplies, which might be neceſſary in time of war and public confuſion.

Among the many cauſes of diſguſt and quarrel, which now, daily and unvoidably, took place between prince and parliament, this article of money is to be conſidered as one of the moſt conſiderable. The king had, by his prerogative alone, encreaſed the rates of the cuſtoms, and eſtabliſhed new impoſitions on ſeveral kinds of commodities.

This exerciſe of power, was certainly arbitary and illegal; but, according to the principles and practices of that time, it might

might admit of ſome apology. The duties of tonnage and poundage were at firſt granted to the crown by a vote of parliament, and for a limited time; and as the grant was always renewed as ſoon as it expired, there could then be no diſpute with regard to the king's right of levying theſe duties; though this impoſition, like all others, was plainly owing to the voluntary conſent of the people.

But as Henry the fifth, and all his ſucceſſors, had this revenue beſtowed upon them for life, the prince, ſo long poſſeſſed of theſe duties, began gradually to regard them as his own proper right and inheritance, and conſidered the vote of parliament as a mere formality, which rather denoted the acquieſence of the people in his prerogative, than conferred any new gift or revenue upon him.

At the time when the parliament granted poundage to the crown, it had eſtabliſhed no particular rates: the impoſition was given as a ſhilling in the pound, or five per cent. on all commodities: it was left to the king, and the privy council, aſſiſted by ſuch merchants as they ſhould pleaſe to conſult, to aſcertain the value of goods, and by that means, the rates of the cuſtoms: and as that value had been fixed before the diſcovery of the Weſt-Indies, which had great-

ly

ly encreaſed the quantity of ſpecie, and of conſequence inhanced the price of all commodities, it was found conſiderably inferior to what it was at its firſt inſtitution; and therefore the cuſtoms, though ſuppoſed to be five per cent. did not, in reality, amount to a third of that value.

From all theſe circumſtances, the king was led to think, that rates, which were now plainly falſe, ought to be corrected; that a valuation of commodities, eſtabliſhed by one act of the privy council, might be rectified by another; that if his right to poundage was inherent in the crown, he ſhould alſo enjoy, of himſelf, the right of correcting its inequalities; if it was derived from the people, he ſhould, at leaſt, maintain the ſpirit of the law, by eſtabliſhing a new and juſter valuation of all commodities.

But, beſides this reaſoning, which ſeems ſpecious, if not concluſive, the king was countenanced in that act of power, by two direct precedents, one in the reign of Mary, another in that of Elizabeth. Both theſe princeſſes had, without conſent of parliament, encreaſed the rates of ſome particular commodities; and as their impoſitions had been, all along, permitted without a murmur, and ſtill continued to be levied, the king had no reaſon to fear, that a farther

farther exercise of the same authority would give any just cause of offence.

To prevent, as much as possible, all popular clamours, he was extremely moderate in the new rates which he fixed. The law empowered him to levy five per cent. on all commodities; yet he did not really, on the whole, exceed two. The customs, during his whole reign, were only raised from an hundred and twenty-seven thousand pounds, to an hundred and sixty thousand; though, besides the increase of the rates, there was a considerable increase of trade and commerce during that period.

But all these precautions could not screen him from the complaints of the house of commons. In their remonstrances to the king on this occasion, they alledged, "that "the reasons of that practice might be ex- "tended much farther, even to the utter "ruin of the ancient liberty of the kingdom, "and of that right of property which the "subjects have in their own goods and "lands." Though expressly discharged by the king to meddle with his prerogative, they passed a bill abolishing these impositions: but the bill was thrown out by the house of lords.

The

The commons likewiſe remonſtrated, though in vain, againſt the practice of borrowing upon privy ſe ls, by which the ſubjects were obliged to lend their money to his majeſty at a low intereſt; the nature and frequency of the king's proclamations, which he endeavoured to ſubſtitute in the place of laws; and the arbitrary and illegal proceedings of the high court of commiſſion: powers, which, though deemed eſſential parts of the prerogative, and occaſionally aſſumed by former monarchs, were, all of them, inconſiſtent with the priciples of a free conſtitution.

But the principal buſineſs, which engaged the attention of the commons during this ſeſſion, was the abolition of wardſhips and purveyance; prerogatives which had been always diſagreeable to the nation, and which were ſucceſſively attacked, in almoſt every ſeſſion, during the whole reign of James.

In this affair the commons made uſe of proper means to enſure ſucceſs; they offered the king a fixed revenue, as an equivalent for the power which he ſhould relinquiſh; and the king was willing to liſten to their propoſals. After much altercation, he offered to reſign theſe prerogatives for the annual ſum of two hundred thouſand

pounds, which they agreed to beſtow upon him: * and nothing was wanting to conclude the bargain, but that the commons ſhould deviſe the funds from which this money ſhould be raiſed.

This

* We learn from Winwood's Memorials, vol. ii. p. 193. the reaſon aſſigned for this particular ſum. "From thence my lord treaſurer came to the price; "and here he ſaid, that the king would no more riſe "and fall like a merchant: that he would not have "a flower of his crown (meaning the court of wards) "ſo much toſſed; that it was too dainty to be ſo "handled. And thus, he ſaid, that he muſt deliver "the very countenance and character of the king's "mind, out of his own hand-writing; which, before "he read, he ſaid he would acquaint us with a plea-"ſant conceit of his majeſty. As concerning the "number of nine ſcore thouſand pounds, which was "our number, he could not affect, becauſe nine was "the number of the poets, who were always beggars, "though they ſerved ſo many muſes; and eleven was "the number of the apoſtles, when the traitor, Judas, "was away; and therefore might beſt be affected by his "majeſty; but there was a mean number, which "might accord us both; and that was ten: which, my "lord treaſurer ſaid, is a ſacred number, for ſo many "were God's commandments, which tend to virtue "and edification." If the commons really granted twenty thouſand pounds a year more, on account of this pleaſant conceit of the king, and the treaſurer, it was certainly the beſt paid wit, for its goodneſs, that ever was in the world. *Hume.*

This ſeſſion was too far advanced to bring ſo difficult a matter to a final period; and though the parliament aſſembled again towards the end of the year, and reſumed the queſtion, they were never able to finiſh an affair on which they were ſo intent, and in which they were ſo deeply intereſted.

The journals of that ſeſſion are loſt; and as the hiſtorians of this reign are very careleſs in relating parliamentary tranſactions, we know not the reaſon of this miſcarriage. It only appears, that James was highly diſpleaſed with the conduct of the parliament, and ſoon after diſſolved it. This was his firſt parliament, and it laſted almoſt ſeven years.

The high and lofty notion which James entertained of his own prerogative, may be eaſily learned from a ſpeech which he delivered to both houſes, even when he was begging a ſupply. "I conclude, then," ſays he, "the point touching the power of "kings, with this axiom of divinity, that, "as to diſpute *what God may do*, is blaſ-"phemy; but *what God wills*, that di-"vines may lawfully, and do ordinarily, "diſpute and diſcuſs; ſo it is ſeditious in "ſubjects, to diſpute what a king may do "in the height of his power. But juſt "kings will ever be willing to declare what

" they will do, if they will not incur the " curſe of God. I will not be content that " my power be diſputed; but I ſhall ever " be willing to make the reaſon appear of " my doings, and rule my actions accord- " ing to *my* laws."

Happily for the nation, James's deſpotiſm was more ſpeculative than practical; yet it is no wonder, that ſuch high and lofty pretenſions, though aſſerted only in words, ſhould arouſe the jealouſy of the commons, and make them more averſe to any of the king's arbitrary impoſitions.

This year was rendered remarkable by a melancholy event, which filled England with the utmoſt anxiety and concern; the murder of the French monarch, by the poiniard of the fanatical Ravilliac. That experience and reputation, which this heroic prince had been acquiring for ſo many years; thoſe treaſures which he had collected; thoſe armies which he had levied and diſciplined; were on the point of being employed in ſome mighty undertaking, which would probably have altered the face of affairs in Europe, when a period was put to his glory by a deſperate enthuſiaſt, who ſacrificed his own life, and that of the prince, to his abominable prejudices.

Were

Were the designs, imputed to Henry by the author of Sully's memoirs, less romantic they might be believed, on account of the authority by which that narration is supported: but such vast projects, had they been real, he must have considered and digested in his mind for many years; and 'tis observable, that about a twelvemonth before, he had been very active in concluding a peace between Spain and the United Provinces; a measure, by which he deprived himself of the succour of his firmest ally, and the best able to assist him in his arduous enterprizes.

'Tis more probable that the war, which, at the time of his death, he meditated against Spain, was the effect of ambition, revenge, or jealousy, in a powerful and military prince, who had long waited for an opportunity of humbling his enemy, and who was excited by some sudden motive or provocation. With his death ended, for some years, the glory of the French monarchy; and that kingdom, falling under an administration weak and bigotted, turbulent and disorderly, the Austrian greatness began afresh to become formidable to Europe.

In England, the general odium under which the Catholics laboured, was greatly encreased by this tragical event; and some of the laws, which had been formerly en-

acted for no other purpose than to over-awe these religionists, began now to be executed with greater rigour and severity.

Next year,* there happened, in Europe, an event of such an important nature, as awakened James from that lethargy and indolence, in which he was usually plunged, and made him summon up all his zeal and activity. A professor of divinity, called Vorstius, the disciple of Arminius, had been removed from a German to a Dutch university; and as he differed from his Britannic majesty in some abstruse points concerning the intimate essence and secret decrees of God, he was regarded as a dangerous rival in scholastic fame, and was, at last, compelled to yield to the legions of that royal doctor, whose syllogisms he might have refuted or eluded.

If James wanted vigour in other incidents of his reign, he behaved here even with arrogance and presumption; and the States were forced, after several remonstrances, to deprive Vorstius of his office, and to expel him from their dominions.

The king desisted from any farther persecution against that professor; though he very charitably hinted to the States, "that, "as to the burning of Vorstius for his blas-"phemies

* A. D. 1611.

"phemies and atheism, he left it entirely "to their own Christian wisdom, but never "surely did heretic better deserve the "flames." The States, however, had too much sense and humanity to understand his majesty's hint; and they even procured, for the ejected professor, a chair in another university.

Notwithstanding the strong suspicion which many people entertained of James's secret propensity to the church of Rome, it is yet certain, that he was firmly attached to the Protestant religion; and, as a proof of his sincerity, he, at this time, erected a college at Chelsea for the maintenance of twenty persons, who should be entirely employed in refuting the Papists and Puritans.

No transaction of this reign reflected so much honour on the sovereign, as did the settlement of Ireland, in which James had been seriously engaged, ever since his accession to the English throne. He frequently boasted of the management of that island, as his master-piece; and it will appear, upon enquiry, that his vanity, in this respect, was not altogether without foundation.*

Afte

* A. D. 1612.

After the reduction of Ireland by Elizabeth, the more arduous taſk ſtill remained; to humanize the barbarous inhabitants, to inure them to laws and to induſtry, and to render their ſubjection as advantageous to themſelves, as uſeful to the crown of England. In this important work, James conducted himſelf by a ſteady, regular, and uniform plan; and in the ſpace of nine years, according to Sir John Davis, he made greater progreſs in civilizing that kingdom, than had been made in the four hundred and forty years, which had elapſed ſince the conqueſt was firſt attempted.

It was neceſſary, in the firſt place, to aboliſh the Iriſh cuſtoms, which ſupplied the place of laws, and which had hitherto ſerved to keep the natives in a ſtate of barbariſm and diſorder.

By the Brehon law or cuſtom, every crime, however atrocious, was puniſhed, not with death, but by a fine or pecuniary mulct, which was impoſed upon the criminal. Murder itſelf, as among all the ancient barbarous nations, was attoned for in this manner; and each man, according to his rank, had a certain rate or price affixed to him, which, if any one was willing to pay, he needed not fear to kill his enemy. This rate was termed his Eric.

When

When Sir William Fitzwilliams, the lord deputy, told Maguire, that he intended to ſend a ſheriff into Fermannah, which, a little before, had been made a county, and ſubjected to the Engliſh law: "your ſheriff," ſaid Maguire, "ſhall be welcome to me: but let me know, beforehand, his eric, or the price of his head; that, if my people cut it off, I may levy the money upon the county." As for oppreſſion, extortion, and the like treſpaſſes, ſo little were they regarded, that no penalty was annexed to them, and no redreſs for ſuch offences could ever be procured.

The cuſtoms of Gavelkinde and Taniſtry, which regulated the diviſion of property, were no leſs ridiculous and abſurd. Upon the death of any perſon, his land, by the cuſtom of Gavelkinde, was ſhared out among all the males of the ſept or family, both natural and legitimate: and, after portion made, if any of the ſept died, his portion was not divided among his ſons; but the chieftain, at his diſcretion, made a new partition of all the lands belonging to that ſept, and gave every one his ſhare. The conſequence of this practice was, that, as no perſon enjoyed the fixed property of any land, he would neither build, plant, incloſe, cultivate,

vate, or improve, as he could not be certain of reaping the fruits of his own labour.

The chieftains or taniſts, though choſen from the principal families, were not hereditary, but were eſtabliſhed by election, or, to ſpeak more properly, by force and violence. Their authority was abſolute; and, though certain lands were annexed to the office, its chief profit was derived from exactions, dues, and aſſeſſments, for which there was no fixed law, and which were impoſed at pleaſure.

Hence aroſe that common proverb among the Iriſh, "that they dwelt weſtward of the "law, which dwelt beyond the river of the "Barrow:" meaning the country which the Engliſh inhabited, and which reached not beyond the compaſs of twenty miles, in the neighbourhood of Dublin.

Theſe Iriſh cuſtoms being aboliſhed, and the Engliſh law ſubſtituted in their place; the king took all the natives under his protection, declared them free citizens, and proceeded to govern them by a regular adminiſtration, military as well as civil. A ſufficient army was kept on foot, its diſcipline carefully inſpected, and its pay duly remitted from England, in order to prevent the ſoldiers from living at free quarters, as had been uſual in former reigns. When Odo-

Odoghartie raiſed an inſurrection, a ſupply of men was ſent over, and that rebellion was immediately ſuppreſſed.

All fears being firſt removed by a general indemnity; circuits were eſtabliſhed, juſtice diſpenſed, oppreſſion baniſhed, and crimes and diſorders of every kind ſeverely puniſhed. As the Iriſh had been univerſally embarked in the rebellion againſt Elizabeth, a reſignation of all the rights, which had been formerly granted them to ſeparate juriſdictions, was rigorouſly demanded; and no authority, but that of the king and the law, was acknowledged throughout the kingdom.

A reſignation of all private eſtates was even exacted; and when they were reſtored, the proprietors received them under ſuch reſtrictions, as might prevent, for the future, all tyranny and oppreſſion over the common people. The value of dues, which the nobles uſually claimed from their vaſſals, was fixed at a ſtated ſum, and all further arbitrary exactions forbid, under the ſevereſt penalties.

The whole province of Ulſter, having been forfeited to the crown by the rebellion of the chieftains, a company was erected in London, for planting colonies in that fertile country: the property was divided into ſmall ſhares, the largeſt not exceeding two thouſand

thouſand acres: tenants were tranſported from England and Scotland: the Iriſh were brought down from the hills and faſtneſſes, and ſettled in the open country: huſbandry and the arts were taught them: a fixed habitation ſecured: plunder and robbery repreſſed: and, by theſe means, Ulſter, from being the moſt wild and uncultivated province of Ireland, ſoon became the moſt fertile, and civilized.

About this time James had an opportunity to exhibit an agreeable ſpecimen of impartiality in the execution of lord Sanquar, a Scottiſh nobleman, who had baſely aſſaſſinated a fencing-maſter, of the name of Turner. In vain did the archbiſhop of Canterbury, and other noblemen, intercede for him: the king, obſerving how much the Engliſh were provoked at his attachment to his countrymen, prudently ſacrificed him to their reſentment.

Towards the cloſe of this year, the people were overwelmed with inexpreſſible grief, on account of the ſudden and unexpected death of Henry, prince of Wales, who, by his many excellent endowments, had engaged the affections of the whole nation. Though he had not yet attained to his eighteenth year, he already poſſeſſed more dignity in his behaviour, and commanded more

more reſpect, than his father, with all his age, learning, and experience.

Neither his high fortune, nor his youth, had betrayed him into any irregular pleaſures: buſineſs and ambition ſeem to have been his ruling paſſion. His diſpoſition, as well as exerciſes, were entirely martial. The French ambaſſador, coming to take leave of him, and aſk his commands for France, found him engaged in the exerciſe of the pike: "tell your king," ſaid he, "in "what occupation you left me employ-"ed."

He had conceived a high opinion of the virtue and capacity of the brave Sir Walter Raleigh. It was his common ſaying, "ſure "no king, but my father, would keep "ſuch a bird in a cage." He ſeems, indeed, to have entertained too great a contempt for the king, on account of his timid and puſillanimous behaviour; and, by that means, recommended himſelf the more effectually to the martial ſpirit of the Engliſh.

Violent reports prevailed, as if Henry had been taken off by poiſon; but the phyſicians, on opening his body, found no ſymptons to countenance ſuch an opinion. Even the king himſelf did not eſcape ſuſpicion on that occaſion; but James's character ſeems to have failed rather in the extreme of

facility and good-nature, than in that of cruelty and violence. His indulgence to Henry was great, and perhaps impolitic, in granting him a very large and independent ſettlement, even in ſuch early youth.

In the beginning of the year,* the marriage of the princeſs Elizabeth, with Frederic, elector palatiue, was completed, and ſerved, in ſome meaſure, to diſpel the grief occaſioned by the death of prince Henry.

But this marriage, though extremely agreeable to the nation, was productive of many calamities, as well to the king as to his ſon-in-law, and greatly hurt the reputation and fortunes of both. The elector, elated by ſo great an alliance, embarked in enterprizes beyond his ſtrength; and the king, being deſirous, but unable, to aſſiſt him in his diſtreſs, loſt entirely, in the end of his life, what remained of the affections and eſteem of his own ſubjects.

Except during the ſeſſions of parliament, the hiſtory of this reign may more properly be termed the hiſtory of the court, than that of the nation. A moſt intereſting object had, for ſome years, attracted the attention of the court: It was a favourite, and one beloved

* A. D. 1613.

beloved by James with the moſt profuſe and unbounded affection.

Towards the end of the year 1609, Robert Carr, a youth of twenty years of age, and of a good family in Scotland, returned to London from his travels, in which he had ſpent a conſiderable time. All his natural accompliſhments, conſiſted in a handſome perſon: all his acquired abilities, in an eaſy air and genteel carriage. He was ſtrongly recommended to his countryman, lord Hay; and that nobleman no ſooner caſt his eye upon him, than he found him poſſeſſed of talents which would qualify him for making a figure in the Engliſh court.

Conſcious of the king's fondneſs for youth, and beauty, and exterior appearance, he ſtudied how matters might be ſo conducted, that this new object ſhould make the deepeſt impreſſion upon him. Without naming him at court, he allotted him the office of preſenting to James his buckler and device, at a match of tilting; and hoped that he would engage the attention of that monarch.

Fortune favoured his deſign, by an incident, which, at firſt, bore a contrary aſpect. When Carr was advancing to perform his office, his unruly horſe flung him,

and broke his leg in the king's preſence. James approached him with looks of pity and compaſſion: his beauty, and tender years, excited love and affection; and the prince ordered him to be immediately carried to the palace, and to be carefully attended. He himſelf, after the tilting, paid him a viſit; and frequently returned during his confinement. The ignorance and ſimplicity of the boy, completed the conqueſt which his exterior grace and accompliſhments had begun.

Other princes have been fond of chuſing their favourites from among the loweſt of the vulgar, and have repoſed the more unlimited confidence in them, that the object has been indebted to their bounty for every honour and diſtinction: James was deſirous that his favourite ſhould alſo receive from him all his ſenſe, experience, and knowledge.

Poſſeſſed with a high opinion of his own abilities, he flattered himſelf with the notion that this raw youth, by his precepts and inſtructions, would ſoon be equal to his wiſeſt miniſters, and be initiated into all the myſteries of government. And as this kind of creation was more perfectly his own work than any other, he ſeems to have entertained a more unbounded affection for his

his minion, than what he bore even to his own children.

He ſoon conferred upon him the honour of knighthood, promoted him to the title of viſcount Rocheſter, inveſted him with the order of the garter, admitted him into the privy-council, and, though at firſt he aſſigned him no particular office, he entruſted him with the ſupreme direction of all his buſineſs and political concerns.

In proportion to this rapid advancement, in confidence and honour, was the wealth beſtowed upon the needy favourite; and, while Saliſbury, and all the ableſt miniſters, could ſcarce find money to defray the neceſſary expences of government, James, with unſparing hand, loaded with riches this uſeleſs and contemptible pageant.

It is ſaid, that the king found his pupil ſo extremely ignorant, as not to underſtand the firſt rudiments of the Latin tongue; and that the monarch, laying aſide the ſceptre, aſſumed the birch, and taught him the principles of grammar.

This, indeed, was an office for which James was much better qualified, than for the government of a kingdom; and, had fortune confined him to the ſtation for which nature ſeems to have intended him, he would probably have paſſed through the

world with more honour to himſelf, and more advantage to his fellow-creatures, than he actually did, and, inſtead of a weak and contemptible monarch, would perhaps have been reckoned an excellent pedagogue.

The favourite was not, at firſt, ſo elated with his good fortune, as not to be ſenſible of his own ignorance and inexperience. He had, therefore, recourſe to the aſſiſtance and advice of a friend; and he was more happy in his choice than is uſual with perſons of his character. In Sir Thomas Overbury he found a judicious and wiſe counſellor, who, reſting all hopes of his own advancement on that of the young favourite, endeavoured to ſeaſon his mind with the principles of prudence and diſcretion.

By his affability and complaiſance, Carr was enabled to avoid the envy which might have otherwiſe attended his ſudden elevation; by profeſſing the higheſt eſteem for the Engliſh, he learned to overcome the prejudices which were entertained againſt his country: And ſo long as he had the modeſty to follow the friendly counſels of Overbury, he engaged the rare fortune of being beloved by the prince, without incurring the hatred of the people.

To complete the happineſs of the pampered minion, nothing was wanting but a kind miſtreſs; and, where high fortune concurred with all the graces of external form, this circumſtance could not be difficult to attain. But it was here that the favourite met with that rock, which ruined all his future proſpects, and which plunged him for ever into an abyſs of infamy, guilt, and miſery.

No ſooner had James aſcended the throne of England than he reſolved to compenſate the many calamities, which the unhappy families of Howard and Devereux had ſuffered in ſupport of his cauſe and that of his mother. Having reſtored young Eſſex to his rank and blood, and beſtowed the titles of Suffolk and Northampton on two brothers of the houſe of Norfolk, he endeavoured to procure the farther pleaſure of uniting their families by the marriage of the earl of Eſſex with lady Frances Howard, daughter to the earl of Suffolk. She was only in her thirteenth, he in his fourteenth year; and it was judged proper, till both ſhould arrive at the age of puberty, that he ſhould go abroad, and ſpend ſome time in his travels.

After an abſence of four years he returned to England, and was charmed with the ſight of

of his lovely bride, who was now in the full bloom of her beauty, and who was univerſally admired and adored by the whole court. But when he approached, and claimed the privileges of a huſband, he met with nothing but coldneſs and indifference, and a flat refuſal of any farther freedoms.

He had recourſe to her parents, who obliged her to accompany him into the country, and to partake of his bed: but nothing could conquer her invincible obſtinacy; and ſhe ſtill roſe from his ſide, without having taſted the nuptial pleaſures. Provoked at this unaccountable behaviour, he at laſt abandoned the purſuit, and ſeparating himſelf from her, allowed her to follow her own will and inclination.

It was generally thought, that a lady of her age and conſtitution could not diſcover ſuch an unconquerable averſion to one man without ſome ſecret attachment to another; and it ſoon appeared that the conjecture of the public was but too well founded. She had liſtened to the addreſſes of the favourite, and her tender heart had been eaſily captivated by the graceful perſon and inſinuating addreſs of the worthleſs minion.

She flattered herſelf, that ſo long as ſhe refuſed the embraces of Eſſex, ſhe could not

not properly be deemed his wife; and that a ſeparation and divorce might ſtill pave the way for a new marriage with her beloved Rocheſter. Though their paſſion was ſo violent, and their opportunities of meeting ſo frequent, that they had already indulged themſelves in all the gratifications of love, they ſtill bewailed their unhappy fate, while their union was not perfect and legitimate; and the lover, as well as the miſtreſs, was impatient, till their mutual ardour ſhould have the ſanction of marriage.

An affair of ſo great conſequence could not be accompliſhed without conſulting Overbury, to whom Rocheſter was wont to communicate all his ſecrets. That faithful counſellor was alarmed at the propoſal; and he employed every argument to divert his friend from ſo fooliſh an attempt.

He repreſented the great difficulty of obtaining a divorce between her and her huſband; and the extreme danger, as well as infamy, of taking into his bed an abandoned woman, who being married to a nobleman of the firſt rank, had not ſcrupled to proſtitute her character, and to laviſh her favours on the object of a capricious and momentary paſſion. And, in the warmth of his friendſhip, he went ſo far as to threaten Rocheſter,

Rocheſter, that he would break off all further correſpondence with him, if he could ſo far forget his honour and his intereſt, as to proſecute the intended marriage.

Rocheſter had the weakneſs to report this converſation to the counteſs of Eſſex; and, when in the fury of her rage and reſentment, ſhe ſwore vengeance againſt Overbury, he had alſo the weakneſs to engage in her vindictive ſchemes, and to doom to deſtruction his faithful friend, for the greateſt inſtance, which he could receive, of his ſincere and cordial friendſhip.

Some contrivance was requiſite for the execution of their cruel purpoſe. Rocheſter applied to the king; and after complaining that his own indulgence to Overbury had inſpired him with a degree of arrogance, which was altogether intolerable, he obtained a commiſſion for his embaſſy to Ruſſia; which he repreſented as a retreat for his friend both advantageous and honourable.

When conſulted by Overbury, he earneſtly adviſed him not to accept this offer, and undertook the taſk of appeaſing his majeſty, ſhould he ſeem to be offended at the refuſal. To the king again he exaggerated the inſolence of Overbury's conduct, and procured a warrant for ſending him

him to the Tower, which James intended as a gentle punishment for his disobedience.

The lieutenant of the Tower was a creature of Rochester's, and had lately been entrusted with the office for this very purpose: he subjected Overbury to such a rigorous confinement, that the unhappy prisoner was debarred from the sight even of his nearest relations; and no intercourse of any kind was permitted with him, during the space of six months, that he had lived in prison.

This impediment being removed, the lovers resolved to pursue their purpose; and the king himself, forgetting the dignity of his character, and his obligations to the family of Essex, warmly seconded the project of obtaining a divorce between the countess and her husband. This, indeed, was the more easy, as Essex was willing to embrace any decent opportunity of separating himself from a profligate woman, by whom he was hated, and whose love, had she thought proper to have offered it, he would now have rejected with contempt and disdain.

The pretence of a divorce was his incapacity to fulfil the conjugal duties; and he acknowledged, that, with regard to the countess, he was conscious of such an infirmity,

firmity, though he was not ſenſible of it with regard to any other woman. In her place too, it is affirmed, a young virgin was ſubſtituted under a maſk, to ſubmit to the legal inſpection of a jury of matrons.

After ſuch a trial, aſſiſted by court influence, and ſupported by the ridiculous opinion of faſcination or witchcraft, the ſentence of divorce was awarded between the earl of Eſſex and his counteſs. And, to complete the farce, the king, unwilling that the lady ſhould loſe any rank by her marriage, conferred on his minion the title of earl of Somerſet.

The counteſs of Sommerſet, having thus accompliſhed her wiſhes, might have enjoyed as much happineſs, as it was poſſible for a woman of her abandoned character to enjoy, had ſhe not been prompted, by her revenge, to embrue her hands in the blood of an innocent man, and by that means, involved herſelf in utter ruin and deſtruction. Though ſhe had already deprived Overbury of his liberty, ſhe could not be content until ſhe had made him feel the ſeverer effects of her reſentment; and ſhe engaged her huſband, as well as her uncle the earl of Northampton, in the atrocious deſign of taking him off ſecretly by poiſon.

Fruit-

Fruitleſs attempts were repeated by weak poiſons; but, at laſt, they gave him one ſo ſtrong and violent, that the ſymptons were evident to every one who approached him. He was buried in the tower, with the greateſt diſpatch and ſecreſy, under pretence, that he had died of ſuch a loathſome diſeaſe, as rendred his corpſe unfit to be ſeen; and, though it occaſioned a ſtrong ſuſpicion immediately in the public, the crime was not fully diſcovered till ſome years after.

The earl of Saliſbury being lately dead, had been ſucceeded in his office by Suffolk, a man of ſlender capacity, who was now obliged to ſupply, from an exhauſted treaſury, the profuſion of James, and of his young favourite. The title of baronet, invented by Saliſbury, was expoſed to ſale; and two hundred patents of that kind of knighthood, were purchaſed by private gentlemen, for ſo many thouſand pounds: each rank of nobility had likewiſe its price affixed to it: privy ſeals were iſſued to the extent of two hundred thouſand pounds; benevolences were demanded, to the amount of fifty-two thouſand pounds: and ſome monopolies, of no great value, were eſtabliſhed.

But all theſe reſources were not ſufficient to anſwer the demands of the king; even though he began to concert ſome ſchemes for abridging his expences. Small as were

the hopes of ſucceſs, a new parliament muſt therefore be aſſembled, and this dangerous expedient, for ſuch it was now become, be once more put to the trial. The miniſters exerted their utmoſt efforts, in order to procure a majority in the houſe; but the meaſures of the king were ſo generally diſagreable to the nation, that all their endeavours proved ineffectual.*

On the contrary, this houſe of commons diſcovered rather a ſtronger ſpirit of liberty than the former; and, inſtead of granting a ſupply, as deſired by his majeſty, who made them ſeveral liberal offers of grace, they immediately reſumed the ſubject, which had been canvaſſed in the laſt parliament, and declaimed againſt the king's uſurpation in pretending to levy new cuſtoms and impoſitions, by the mere authority of his prerogative. To prevent, if poſſible, the like practices for the future, they applied to the lords for a conference on this topic, in order to concert meaſures for ſecuring the liberty of the ſubject, and circumſcribing the exorbitant and unlimited power of the crown.

The king, informed of this circumſtance, immediately diſſolved the parliament, with marks

* A. D. 1614.

marks of the higheſt indignation; and he even carried his reſentment ſo far, as to impriſon ſome of the members, who had been moſt forward in the oppoſition: a ſtep by which he expoſed himſelf ſtill farther to the hatred of the nation.

The public conduct of the king and the commons, throughout this whole reign, was ſuch as afforded ſufficient ground of quarrel and diſguſt: yet we are not to ſuppoſe, that this was the ſole foundation of that jealouſy which prevailed between them.

It frequently happened, that, during debates in the houſe, a particular member, more bold and zealous than the reſt, would diſplay the higheſt ſentiments of liberty, which the commons were pleaſed to hear, with ſilence and ſeeming approbation; and the king, apprized of theſe harangues, imagined, that the whole houſe were tinctured with the ſame principles, and were embarked in a combination againſt his prerogative.

James, on the other hand, though he piqued himſelf extremely on his king-craft, (as he called it) and was not altogether incapable of diſſimulation, ſeems not to have poſſeſſed, in any conſiderable degree, the gift of ſecreſy; but openly, at table, and,

in all companies, enforced thoſe maxims of arbitrary power, which he had unhappily imbibed.

Before a numerous audience, he had been ſo ungaurded, as to talk with great contempt of the common-law of England, and to repreſent it as infinitely inferior to the civil law: an imprudence for which he had been obliged to apologize in a ſpeech to the former parliament.

As a ſpecimen of his uſual liberty of talk, we may mention an anecdote, though it happened ſome time afterwards, which we find in the life of Waller, and which that poet was often wont to relate. When Waller was young, he had the curioſity to go to court; and he ſtood in the circle, and ſaw James dine; where, among other company, there were two biſhops, Neile and Andrews.

The king, with an audible voice, propoſed this queſtion, whether he might not take his ſubjects money when he wanted it, without all this formality of parliament? Neile replied, "God forbid you ſhould not, "for you are the breath of our noſtrils." Andrews declined giving an anſwer, as he was not, he ſaid, converſant in parliamentary caſes; but, upon the king's preſſing him, and ſaying he would admit of no apology, the biſhop replied with much humour:

mour: "Why then, I think, your majeſty "may very lawfully take my brother Neile's "money; for he offers it."

The favourite had hitherto been able to elude the enquiry of juſtice; but he had not been able to ſuppreſs that ſtill voice which can make itſelf be heard amidſt all the hurry and buſtle of a court, and confounds the criminal with the juſt repreſentation of his ſecret enormities.

Conſcious of the murder of his friend, Somerſet enjoyed little ſatisfaction in the pleaſures of love, or the utmoſt kindneſs and indulgence of his maſter. The graces of his youth gradually decayed, the gaiety of his manners inſenſibly vaniſhed, and his politeneſs and affability, were changed into ſullenneſs and ſilence; and the king, who had been captivated by theſe ſuperficial accompliſhments, began to withdraw his affections from a man who no longer contributed to his amuſement.

The ſagacious courtiers perceived the firſt ſymptoms of this alienation: Somerſet's enemies laid hold of the opportunity, and preſented to the king a new minion.* George Villiers, a youth of one and twenty,

* A. D. 1615.

younger brother of a good family, returned at this time from his travels, and was diſtinguiſhed by the advantages of a handſome perſon, genteel air, and faſhionable apparel.

At a comedy, which was acted at Cambridge, he was placed full in James's eye, and immediately engaged the attention, and, in the ſame moment, the affections of that monarch. Aſhamed of his own weakneſs, the king endeavoured, but in vain, to conceal the attachment which he felt to the young ſtranger; and he employed every artifice to fix him in his ſervice, without ſeeming to deſire it. He was firmly reſolved, he ſaid, not to beſtow any office upon him, unleſs ſolicited by the queen; and he declared, that it ſhould only be in compliance with her requeſt, that he would agree to admit him near his perſon.

Application was preſently made to her majeſty; but ſhe, ſenſible of the king's folly in this particular, refuſed at firſt to have any ſhare in giving him a new minion; nor could ſhe be perſuaded to oblige him, by aſking this favour, until ſhe was overcome by the importunities of Abbot, archbiſhop of Canterbury, a decent prelate, and one much prejudiced againſt Somerſet. The king now imagined that all appear-

ances

ances were fully ſaved; and he no longer reſtained his affection, but conferred the office of cup-bearer on young Villiers.

The whole court was ſplit into parties between the two minions; while ſome endeavoured to promote the riſing intereſt of Villiers, and others thought it more prudent to ſupport the eſtabliſhed credit of Somerſet. The king himſelf, divided between inclination and decorum, augmented the doubt and uncertainty of the courtiers; and the ſtern jealouſy of the old favourite, who rejected every offer of friendſhip from his rival, occaſioned perpetual quarrels between their adherents. But the diſcovery of Somerſet's guilt, in the murder of Overbury, at laſt put an end to the controverſy, and involved him in that ruin and infamy which his crime ſo amply deſerved.

An apothecary's ſervant, who had been employed in preparing the poiſon, having retired to Fluſhing, began to talk very freely of the whole ſecret; and the affair at laſt reached the ears of Trumbal, the king's ambaſſador in the Low Countries. Trumbal immediately tranſmitted the intelligence to Sir Ralph Winwood, ſecretary of ſtate, who imparted the matter to his majeſty. The king, ſurprized and confounded to find ſuch enormous guilt in a man whom he had admitted

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The whole court was split into parties between the two minions; while some endeavoured to promote the rising interest of Villiers, and others thought it more prudent to support the established credit of Somerset. The king himself, divided between inclination and decorum, augmented the doubt and uncertainty of the courtiers; and the stern jealousy of the old favourite, who rejected every offer of friendship from his rival, occasioned perpetual quarrels between their adherents. But the discovery of Somerset's guilt, in the murder of Overbury, at last put an end to the controversy, and involved him in that ruin and infamy which his crime so amply deserved.

An apothecary's servant, who had been employed in preparing the poison, having retired to Flushing, began to talk very freely of the whole secret; and the affair at last reached the ears of Trumbal, the king's ambassador in the Low Countries. Trumbal immediately transmitted the intelligence to Sir Ralph Winwood, secretary of state, who imparted the matter to his majesty. The king, surprized and confounded to find such enormous guilt in a man whom he had admitted

admitted into the most intimate familiarity, sent for Sir Edward Coke, lord chief justice, and ordered him to examine into the affair with the utmost rigour and impartiality.

Coke executed his orders with that industry and severity for which he was so remarkable: the whole labyrinth of guilt was fully unfolded: the lesser criminals, Sir Gervis Elvis, lieutenant of the Tower, Franklin, Weston, Mrs. Turner, were first tried and condemned: Somerset and his countess were afterwards found guilty: Northampton's death, a little before, had saved him from the like fate.*

All

* If we may believe Sir Anthony Weldon, Coke discovered, among Somerset's papers, some extraordinary particulars relating to the death of prince Henry; for he one day exclaimed upon the bench, "God "knows what became of that sweet babe prince "Henry! but I know somewhat ——." The king is said to have been greatly alarmed, when he heard that Somerset was refractory, and refused to appear at the bar, as if he had been master of some secrets which affected the character of his sovereign. The same anxiety he expressed with regard to Sir Thomas Monson, who was brought to his trial for being concerned in the murder, and sent back to the Tower, by the king's express order, before his examination was finished. His servant, Symon, who had carried a poisoned tart to Sir Thomas Overbury, being brought into court;

All the accomplices in Overbury's murder, ſuffered the puniſhment due to their crime: but the king granted a pardon to the principals, Somerſet and his counteſs. It muſt be acknowledged, that James's impartiality had been highly commendable, had he perſevered in his firſt reſolution of delivering up to the rigour of the law, all the criminals without exception: but, when we conſider the tender affection which he had once entertained for the earl and the counteſs, we ſhall perhaps be more inclined to applaud the humanity of his temper, than to condemn him for his want of juſtice.

To mitigate the ſeverity of their fate, after ſome years impriſonment, he reſtored them to their liberty, and indulged them with a penſion, with which they retired into the country, and languiſhed out old age in infamy and obſcurity. Their guilty loves were

court; "So Symon," ſaid the chief juſtice, "you "have had a hand in this poiſoning buſineſs." "Only "a finger, my lord," replied the culprit, "and that "coſt me all my nails and hair." He had, it ſeems, taſted the ſyrup of the tart with his finger, and even that ſmall quantity produced theſe violent effects upon his conſtitution. This ingenuous anſwer ſaved his life; for it was thought he would not have taſted the ſyrup, had he known it to be poiſoned. *Rapin.*

were converted into the most deadly hatred; and they lived several years in the same house, without any intercourse or correspondence with each other.

The fall of Somerset, and his banishment from court, paved the way for young Villiers to rise at once to the full height of favour, of honours, and of riches. Had James's passion been regulated by the common rules of prudence, the place of cupbearer would have attached Villiers to his person, and might well have satisfied one of his age and family: but such promotion was greatly inferior to what he intended for his youthful favourite.

In the course of a few years, he advanced him to the rank of viscount Villiers, earl, marquis, and duke of Buckingham, knight of the garter, master of the horse, chief justice in Eyre, warden of the Cinque Ports, steward of Westminster, constable of Windsor, and lord high admiral of England. His mother was created countess of Buckingham; his brother viscount Purbeck; and a numerous train of needy relations were brought into places of trust and profit.

An extravagant court to gratify with pleasure, a necessitous family to supply with riches, were enterprizes too difficult for the empty

empty Exchequer of James. In order to procure a little money, the cautionary towns muſt be delivered up to the Dutch: a meaſure which has been ſeverely blamed by almoſt all hiſtorians; and it may ſafely be affirmed, that, though it muſt be allowed to be ſomewhat impolitic, it has been blamed greatly beyond its real worth and importance.

When queen Elizabeth ſupplied the infant Republic with money, with the view of humbling the pride and checking the ambition of Spain, ſhe ſtill entertained hopes of being reimburſed; and ſhe got conſigned into her hands the three important fortreſſes of Fluſhing, the Brille, and Rammekins, as pledges for the money that was due to her.

Moved with pity for the indigent condition of the States, ſhe agreed that the debt ſhould bear no intereſt, and ſhe engaged, that, if ever England concluded a ſeparate peace with Spain, ſhe ſhould maintain the troops which garriſoned theſe fortreſſes. It is certain that the States expected a very conſiderable abatement of the debt, even at a time when James's Exchequer was tolerably full, from the only conſiderable ſupply which he ever received from his parliament; much more were they encouraged in this hope by his preſent neceſſitous condition.

In

In this negociation they employed Caron their minister at London, who offered the king a little more than a third of the sum, which was owing him, and which amounted in the whole to eight hundred, eighteen thousand, four hundred and eight pounds.

James considered that the pay of the garrisons was so heavy on his narrow revenue, that very great arrears were due to the soldiers, who were ready to mutiny for want of subsistence; that, since his accession to the throne of England, he had expended above three hundred thousand pound in their maintenance, and there appeared no end of these charges; that, by the the most exact calculation, the third of the sum paid him presently was much preferable to the whole payable ten years after; that the States, trusting to his pacific disposition, as well as their close union of interest and affection with his people, were nowise sollicitous to recover these places, and might allow them to remain in his hands, if full payment was demanded; that this union was really so natural, that the Dutch would never refuse to agree to any reasonable measures for mutual support, even though freed from the restraint of these garrisons; that the exchequer of the Republic, was at present so exhausted, that they found

found it extremely difficult, as they were now deprived of the French ſubſidies, to preſerve themſelves in that poſture of defence, which was neceſſary during their truce with Spain; that the Spaniards were perpetually importuning the king for the reſtitution of theſe towns as belonging to their crown; and no cordial agreement could ever be made with that nation while they continued in the hands of the Engliſh.

Theſe motives, together with his preſſing neceſſities, induced the king to accept of Caron's offer; and to evacuate the cautionary towns, which held the States in total ſubjection, and which an ambitious and enterprizing prince would have conſidered as his moſt valuable poſſeſſion. From this period we may date the full liberty of the Dutch commonwealth.

As James conſidered epiſcopacy as eſſentially connected with monarchy, he had, ever ſince his acceſſion to the throne of England, reſolved to embrace the firſt opportunity of reducing the Scottiſh clergy to an uniformity with the Engliſh church.*

He had lately ſent the following rules to be inſerted in their canons: that they ſhould receive the communion kneeling: that the ſacrament ſhould be adminiſtered in private

* A. D. 1617.

to ſick perſons: that they ſhould keep the feſtivals of Chriſtmas, Eaſter, Aſcenſion, and Whitſuntide: and that children of eight years of age and upwards ſhould be confirmed by the biſhops.

The general aſſembly, apprehending that theſe articles were only introductory to more important innovations, rejected them with one voice; and the king, provoked at their obſtinacy, determined to repair into Scotland, and by the terror of his preſence, compel them to obedience.

Before his departure from London, he publiſhed a proclamation, ſignifying his deſign of viſiting his ancient kingdom; not with a view of altering its civil and eccleſiaſtical ſtate, but in order to reform certain abuſes, which had crept into the church and government. Soon after, he ſent ſome officers of his houſhold to Edinburgh, directing them to adorn his chapel with pictures and ſtatues; a meaſure which gave great offence to the whole nation.

James, in perſon, opened the parliament of Scotland with a long ſpeech, according to his uſual cuſtom, in which, among many other particulars, he recommended the nomination of a certain number of commiſſioners to regulate the affairs of religion; and the parliament aſſenting to his propoſal, he appointed

appointed them from among his own creatures.

Having gained this point, he next insisted upon their establishing the following article: that every thing ordained by the king and his bishops, concerning the exterior government of the church, should have the force of a law, to which all persons should be bound to pay an implicit obedience.

The ministers, alarmed at these extraordinary proceedings, entered a protest against this article; and the whole nation was put in a ferment. James, disconcerted by this opposition, commanded the clergy to meet him at St. Andrew's, where he told them he was resolved to be obeyed; and they, overawed by his menaces, entreated him to summon a general assembly, and procure their consent. The king asking, "what "assurance he might have of the assembly's "consent:" they answered, that they saw no reason to the contrary, and knew that the assembly would comply with any reasonable demand of his majesty. "But if it "fall out otherwise," said the king, "and "my proposal be rejected, the difficulty "will be the greater; and when I shall "use my authority in establishing these ce-"remonies, they will call me tyrant and

"perſecutor." All crying out, that none could be ſo mad; "yet experience," ſaid the king, "tells me, that it may really "happen. Therefore, unleſs I be made "ſure, I will not give way to an aſſembly." Galloway, one of the miniſters, ſaying, that the archbiſhop of St. Andrew's would anſwer for them, the archbiſhop refuſed; for that he had been deceived by them, and had frequently experienced their breach of promiſe. Then ſaid Galloway, "if your "majeſty will truſt me, I will anſwer for "them." The king conſented; and an aſſembly was convoked on the twenty-fifth day of November enſuing.

Yet this aſſembly, which met after the king's departure from Scotland, found means to elude all his applications; and it was not till the ſubſequent year, that he was able to obtain a vote for receiving his ceremonies. And, through every particular of this affair, in the parliament as well as in the general aſſemblies, the nation diſcovered the utmoſt averſion to theſe innovations; and nothing but the king's importunity and authority, had extorted a ſeeming conſent, which was belied by the inward ſentiments of all ranks of people.

Even

Even the few, who were not ſwayed by religious motives, thought the national honour ſacrificed by a ſervile imitation of the modes of worſhip eſtabliſhed in England. And every prudent man agreed in condemning the conduct of the king, who, by an ill-timed zeal for his favourite ceremonies, had betrayed, though in an oppoſite extreme, equal narrowneſs of mind, with the perſons whom he affected to treat with ſo much contempt.

At the ſame time that James ſhocked, in ſo violent a manner, the principles of his Scottiſh ſubjects, he acted in oppoſition to thoſe of his Engliſh. During the prevalence of Popery in England, as in all Popiſh countries at preſent, the remaining part of Sunday, after the concluſion of the public ſervice, was devoted to ſports and recreations.

The king, who was no enemy to the pageantry of the Romiſh church, reſolved, if poſſible, to reſtore this abſurd and indecent cuſtom. With this view he publiſhed a performance, entitled the Book of Sports, recommending all kinds of diverſion after ſermon. He ordered it to be publicly read in all churches; and ſuch miniſters as refuſed to comply with this injunction, were ſeverely puniſhed by the court of high com-

miſſion. He ſoon found, however, that he could not carry his point; and that the people were determined to play when they pleaſed, not when his majeſty thought proper.*

At the time when Sir Walter Raleigh was committed to the Tower, his haughty and overbearing behaviour, had rendered him the moſt unpopular man in England; and his condemnation was chiefly owing to that public odium under which he laboured. In the courſe of thirteen years, during which he was a priſoner, the ſentiments of the nation had greatly altered in his favour. Men had time to reflect on the ſeverity,

* The lord-mayor of London diſcovered a noble ſpirit of independence on this occaſion. The court being going to remove to Theobald's on Monday, the king's carriages had occaſion to paſs through the city on Sunday; and the lord-mayor immediately ſtopped them. The king, informed of this circumſtance, broke out into a violent paſſion, ſwearing, "that he thought "there had been no kings in England but himſelf." Recollecting himſelf, however, he ſent a warrant to the lord-mayor, ordering him to let the carriages paſs. The lord-mayor obeyed, with this anſwer; "while it "was in my power, I did my duty; but that being "ſuperceded by a ſuperior power, it is now my duty to "obey." The king, upon reflexion, was ſo well pleaſed with the mayor's behaviour, that he returned him thanks for his ſpirited conduct.

Sr WALTER RALEGH
T. Hulett sculp.
Engrav'd for Rider's History of England.

severity, not to say injustice, of his sentence: they pitied his bold and enterprizing spirit, which languished in the rigour of confinement; they admired the extensive genius of the man, who, being educated amidst the din of arms, had outstript, in the pursuits of literature, even those of the most studious and contemplative lives: and they were charmed with his unbroken magnanimity, which, at his age, and in his circumstances, could enable him to undertake and accomplish so difficult a work as his history of the world.

To encourage these favourable dispositions, on which he founded the hopes of retrieving his liberty, he spread the report of a golden mine, which he had discovered in Guiana, and which was sufficient, he said, not only to enrich the adventurers, but to afford immense treasures to the nation. The king gave little credit to these mighty promises; both because he imagined, that no such mine, as that described, existed any where in nature, and because he regarded Raleigh as a man of desperate fortunes, whose business it was, by any means, to recover his freedom, and to restore himself to power and authority.

Thinking, however, that he had already suffered sufficient punishment, he set him at liberty;

liberty;* and when his boasts of the golden mine had induced multitudes to offer him their service, the king gave them permission to try the adventure, and, at their request, bestowed on Raleigh authority over his fellow adventurers.

Though strongly importuned, he still refused to grant him a pardon, which seemed a natural consequence of investing him with power and command. But James alledged, that he was still diffident of Raleigh's designs: and he was resolved, he said, to keep the former sentence in force, in order to check him in his future behaviour.

Raleigh was sensible that it was far from the king's purpose to attack any of the Spanish settlements; he therefore affirmed, that Spain had planted no colonies on that part of the coast where the mine lay. When Gondomar, the Spanish ambassador, alarmed at his preparations, presented a remonstrance to the king; Raleigh still asserted the innocence of his intentions: and James assured Gondomar, that he durst not commit any act of hostility, and that he should pay with his head for so presumptuous an enterprize.

But the minister, shrewdly suspecting that twelve armed vessels were not equipped for the

* A. D. 1618.

the ſake of a diſcovery, tranſmitted the intelligence to the court of Madrid, who immediately gave orders for ſtrengthening and fortifying all their ſettlements, particularly thoſe along the coaſt of Guiana.

When the courage and avarice of the Spaniards and Portugueſe had diſcovered ſo many new worlds, they were determined to ſhow their ſuperiority to the barbarous heathens, whom they ſubdued, not only in arts and arms, but alſo in the juſtice of their cauſe. With this view they applied to Alexander the ſixth, who then filled the papal chair; and he, with great generoſity, and from the inexhauſtible plenitude of his power, beſtowed on the Spaniards the whole weſtern, and on the Portugueſe the whole eaſtern, part of the globe.

The more ſcrupulous Proteſtants, who owned not the authority of the Roman pontiff, conſidered the firſt diſcovery as the foundation of their right; and if a pyrate, or ſea-adventurer of their nation, had but erected a ſtick or ſtone on the coaſt, as a mark of his landing, they imagined that the whole continent belonged to them, and that they were entitled to expel or extirpate, as uſurpers, the ancient poſſeſſors and inhabitants.

It was in this manner, that Sir Walter Raleigh, about twenty three years before, had taken poſſeſſion of the continent of Guiana; a region as large as the half of Europe; and though he had, immediately after, quitted the coaſt, he yet affirmed, that the Engliſh title to the whole remained certain and indiſputable.

But it happened, in the mean time, that the Spaniards, either ignorant or regardleſs of this imaginary claim (which, after all, was ſomewhat better than the pope's donation) had poſſeſſed themſelves of a part of Guiana, had eſtabliſhed a ſettlement on the river Oroonoko, had built a little town called St. Thomas, and were working ſome mines of little value.

To this place Raleigh directed his courſe; and remaining himſelf at the mouth of the river, with five of his largeſt ſhips, he ſent up the reſt to St. Thomas, under the conduct of his ſon, and of captain Keymis, a perſon in whom he repoſed the moſt entire confidence. The Spaniards, who expected this invaſion, endeavoured to oppoſe the landing of the Engliſh; but they were repulſed, and driven back into the town.

Young Raleigh, to animate his men, called out, "that this was the true mine, "and none but fools looked for any other;" and,

and, advancing among the foremoſt, received a ſhot, of which he immediately died. Keymis, and his companions, were not diſcouraged by this event: they ruſhed on to the attack, and entered the town, which they afterwards burned; though they found not in it any thing of value.

Raleigh acknowledged, that he himſelf had not ſeen the mine, in queſt of which he had perſuaded ſo many people to riſk their lives and fortunes: it was Keymis, he ſaid, who had formerly diſcovered it, and had brought him that lump of ore which promiſed ſuch immenſe treaſures. Yet Keymis, who confeſſed he was within two hours march of the place, refuſed, on the moſt ridiculous pretences, to take any effectual ſteps towards the finding it; and he returned immediately to Raleigh with the melancholy tidings of his ſon's death, and the miſcarriage of the enterprize. Overwhelmed with ſhame, and dreading puniſhment for his behaviour, Keymis retired into his cabin, and ended his life with a piſtol.

The other adventurers now ſuſpected that Raleigh had deceived them; that he had never known of any ſuch mine as he pretended to go in ſearch of; that his deſign had ever been to pillage St. Thomas; and, having enriched his men with the ſpoils of

that

that place, to proceed to the invasion of the other Spanish settlements; that he hoped to retrieve his ruined affairs, by such daring enterprizes; and that he trusted to the money he should acquire, for making his peace with England; or, if that should be impossible, that he intended to retire into some other country, were his riches would secure him a safe retreat.

The small booty gained by the spoil of St. Thomas, discouraged Raleigh's companions from engaging in these projects; tho' there were several circumstances in the treaty, and late transactions between the two nations, which might have induced them to undertake such a pyratical war against the Spaniards.

When the English made peace with Spain, they followed the example of Henry the fourth of France, who, at the treaty of Vervins, finding it impossible to settle all controversies with regard to the Indian trade, had agreed to pass over that article in total silence. The Spaniards having, all along, issued severe edicts against the intercourse of any European nation with their colonies, interpreted this silence in their own favour, and regarded it as a tacit acknowledgement in the English, of the established laws of Spain.

The

The Engliſh, on the contrary, alledged, that, as they had never been excluded by any treaty from trading with any part of the king of Spain's dominions, it was ſtill as lawful for them to traffick with his colonies in either Indies, as with his European territories. In conſequence of this uncertainty, many adventurers from England ſailed to the Spaniſh Indies, and were ſeverely puniſhed, when ſeized; as they, on the other hand, often ſtole, and, when ſuperior in power, forced a trade with the inhabitants, and oppoſed, nay ſometimes defeated, the Spaniſh governours.

Theſe outrages, which had long been committed on both ſides, it was reſolved to bury in total oblivion; becauſe of the difficulty, if not impoſſibility, of remedying them, upon any fixed principle.

But as there was a wide difference between private adventurers in ſingle ſhips, and a fleet acting under a royal commiſſion; Raleigh's companions judged it moſt prudent to return immediately to England, and carry him along with them to anſwer for his conduct. It is alledged, though without any certain proof, that he made uſe of many artifices to perſuade them to invade the Spaniſh ſettlements, and, failing in that, to make his eſcape

into France: but all these proving unsuccessful, he was brought back to England, and strictly examined, as well as his fellow-adventurers, before the privy-council.

The council unanimously gave it as their opinion, that the former suspicions, with regard to Raleigh's intentions, were well founded; that he had deceived the king by the representations which he had given of his projected enterprize; that he had committed acts of hostility and violence against his majesty's allies; and that he had wilfully burned and demolished a town belonging to the king of Spain.

He might have been tried either by common law for this piracy and outrage, or by martial law for breach of orders; but it was a fixed maxim among the gentlemen of the long robe, that as he was under an actual attainder for high-treason, he could not be brought to a new trial for any other offence. To gratify, therefore, the court of Spain, who complained loudly of Raleigh's depredations, the king was so cruel and so mean-spirited as to avail himself of that power which he had purposely reserved in his own hands, and he signed the warrant for putting him to death upon the former sentence.

Raleigh,

Raleigh, finding his fate inevitable, summoned up all his courage; and though he had formerly employed many low artifices, such as counterfeiting madness, sickness, and a variety of diseases, in order to prevent his trial, and effect his escape; he now determined to act his part with that bravery and resolution which he possessed in such an eminent degree. "It "is a sharp remedy," said he, "but a "sure one for all ills;" when he felt the edge of the ax, by which he was to be beheaded. His speech to the people was calm and eloquent; with the utmost indifference he laid his neck upon the block, and his head was severed from his body at two strokes by the executioner.

No measure of James's reign exposed him more to the public hatred, than did the punishment of Sir Walter Raleigh. To execute a sentence, which was originally so severe, which had so long been suspended, and which seemed to have been tacitly forgiven, by investing him with a new trust and commission, was regarded as the height of cruelty and injustice. To sacrifice to a pretended friend, but real enemy, of England, the life of the only man in the nation, who was distinguished for his valour and military conduct, was

conſidered as an inſtance of meanneſs and puſillanimity. And the cloſe alliance, which the king was now contracting with Spain, being univerſally diſagreeable, rendered this mark of his complaiſance ſtill more odious and hateful.

James had conceived an opinion, which was peculiar to himſelf, and which had been embraced by none of his predeceſſors, that any alliance, below that of a king, was unworthy a prince of Wales; and he would never ſuffer other than a daughter of France or Spain, to be named as a match for his ſon. This ſpecies of pride, which in reality implied meanneſs, as if he could derive honour from any alliance, was ſo generally known, that Spain had built on it the hopes of ruling, in the moſt important tranſactions, this monarch, ſo little remarkable for politics or prudence.

During the life of Henry, the king of Spain had ſignified his intention of giving that prince his eldeſt daughter, whom he afterwards married to the young king of France, Lewis the thirteenth. At that time, the intention of the Spaniards was to perſuade James to obſerve a neutrality with regard to the ſucceſſion of Cleves, which was conteſted between the Proteſtant

tant and Popiſh line: but the artifice did not then ſucceed; and James, in conſequence of his alliance with the Dutch, and Henry the fourth of France, ſent four thouſand men, under the command of Sir Edward Cecil, who joined these two powers, and put the marquis of Brandenburg and the Palatine of Newbourg in poſſeſſion of that dutchy.

Gondomar was, at that time, the Spaniſh ambaſſador in England; a man, who by his artful flattery, and profound policy, had gained an entire aſcendant over the mind of James. He now offered the ſecond daughter of Spain to prince Charles; and that he might render the propoſal the more tempting to the neceſſitous monarch, he gave hopes of an immenſe fortune which ſhould attend the princeſs. The court of Spain, though reſolved to contract no alliance with a heretic, engaged in a negociation with James, which they induſtriouſly protracted, and amidſt every diſappointment, ſtill encouraged him with freſh hopes of ſucceſs. The affairs of Germany, which were now involved in the utmoſt confuſion, became, every day, a new motive for this perfidious conduct.

As the Auſtrian princes, throughout all their extenſive dominions, had ever em-

ployed the pretence of religion, to support their cruel usurpations, they now met with resistance from a like principle; and the Catholic religion, as usual, had embraced the cause of despotism; the Protestant, that of liberty.

The states of Bohemia, having revolted from the emperor Mathias, continued their rebellion against his successor Ferdinand, and insisted on the observance of all the edicts enacted in favour of the reformed religion, together with the re-establishment of their ancient laws and constitution. The neighbouring principalities, Silesia, Moravia, Lusatia, Austria, even the kingdom of Hungary, engaged in the quarrel; and throughout all these populous and warlike provinces, the spirit of discord and civil dissension universally prevailed.

Ferdinand the second, who was endued with greater abilities, than are commonly possessed by the Austrian princes, prepared himself, with great diligence, for the recovery of his authority; and besides the assistance of his subjects, who adhered to the Catholic religion, he attached to his side a powerful combination of the neighbouring potentates.*

All

* A. D. 1619.

All the Catholic princes of the empire had declared in his favour; even Saxony, the moſt powerful of the Proteſtant: the kingdom of Poland had eſpouſed his quarrel; and, above all, the Spaniſh monarch, conſidering his own intereſt as inſeparably connected with that of the younger branch of his family, ſent him powerful ſuccours from Italy and from the Low-Countries; and he alſo furniſhed large ſums of money for the ſupport of Ferdinand, and of the Catholic religion.

The ſtates of Bohemia, alarmed at theſe mighty preparations, began alſo to ſue for foreign aid; and together with that aſſiſtance which they received from the Evangelical union in Germany, they endeavoured to form connexions with more potent princes. They turned their eyes towards Frederic, Elector Palatine. They conſidered, that beſides the power of his own ſtate, which was great, he was ſon-in-law to the king of England, and nephew to prince Maurice, who had obtained an almoſt unlimited authority in the United Provinces.

They imagined, that theſe princes, influenced by the ties of blood, as well as by a regard for their common religion, would be ready to ſupport the fortunes of Frederic, and would endeavour to promote

his

his greatness. They therefore made him an offer of their crown, which they considered as elective; and the young Palatine, prompted by ambition, without consulting either James, or Maurice, whose opposition he apprehended, immediately embraced the offer, and advanced with all his forces into Bohemia, in order to protect his new subjects.

No sooner were the news of these events brought into England, than the whole nation expressed the utmost ardour to engage in the quarrel. The power of the house of Austria was now become formidable to all the other states of Europe: the fate of a prince, who had married a daughter of England, was a matter in which they considered themselves as deeply interested: the Protestant religion they regarded as only another name for civil liberty; and as this was a blessing which they were resolved to enjoy in their own country, they were eager to preserve the possession of it in every other state with which they were connected: they, therefore, intreated the king to undertake the defence of his son-in-law, in which case they would chearfully assist him with their lives and fortunes.

But

But James, beſides that he had too little courage for ſuch difficult enterprizes, was reſtrained by another motive, which had always a mighty influence over him. He refuſed to encourage the revolt of ſubjects againſt their ſovereign. From the very firſt he denied to his ſon-in-law the title of king of Bohemia: he forbad him to be prayed for in the churches under that appellation: and, though he acknowledged that he had in no wiſe examined the pretenſions, privileges, and conſtitution of the revolted States, ſo exalted was his idea of the rights of kings, that he imagined ſubjects muſt ever be in the wrong, when they preſumed to reſiſt thoſe who had obtained or uſurped that majeſtic title.

Thus his arbitrary and deſpotic principles led him not only to attack the liberties of his own ſubjects, but to leave the liberties of other ſtates at the mercy of every bold and daring invader.

Mean while, affairs in Germany haſtened towards a criſis.* Ferdinand collected a mighty force under the command of the duke of Bavaria and the count of Bucquoy, and marched againſt his enemy in Bohemia. In the Low-Countries, Spinola aſſembled a veteran army of thirty thouſand men.

* A. D. 1620.

men. When Edmonds, the king's resident at Brussels, demanded of the archduke Albert the meaning of these preparations, he was told that the orders for this armament had been sent to Spinola from Madrid, and that he alone knew the purpose for which it was intended. Spinola again alledged to the minister that his orders were still sealed; but that, if Edmonds would attend him in his march to Coblentz, he would there open them, and give him full satisfaction.

It was more easy to discover his intentions, than to prevent their success. Almost at one and the same time, it was known in England, that Frederic, being defeated in the great and decisive battle of Prague, had fled with his family into Holland, and that Spinola had invaded the Palatinate, and meeting with no opposition, except from some princes of the union, and from one English regiment of two thousand four hundred men, conducted by the gallant Sir Horace Vere, had, in a short time, subdued the greatest part of that principality.

Loud were now the complaints of the people against the king's timid and pusillanimous conduct, by which he had not only deprived the palatine of all that aid and assist-

assistance, which the English were both willing and able to afford him, but had also deterred other princes from espousing his quarrel.

James, however, imagined, that he should easily be able to procure that by gentle means which his subjects were so eager to accomplish by force of arms. He flattered himself, that as he had displayed so much justice and moderation through all these transactions, the whole house of Austria, though not over-awed by the power of England, would willingly, from mere respect to his virtue, refer the controversy to his arbitration. He hoped, that, after he had contracted a more intimate alliance with the Spanish monarch, by means of his son's marriage, the restitution of the palatinate might be obtained, from the motive alone of friendship and personal regard.

He never dreamed, that his peaceable disposition, the more highly it was praised, exposed him only to the greater contempt and derision. He considered not, that the Spanish match was itself attended with such difficulties, that all his art of negociation would hardly be able to bring it to effect; much less, that that match could safely be depended on, as the means of procuring such mighty advantages.

Mean

Meanwhile he resolved to conceal his real intention, and to employ the pretext of restoring the palatine, in order to obtain a supply of money. He first tried the expedient of a benevolence or free-gift from individuals, alledging the urgency of the case would not allow time for a more regular method; but the people, who considered these benevolences as real extortions, absolutely refused to contribute. A parliament, therefore, was found to be the only resource, and writs were issued for summoning that great council of the nation.*

In this parliament it was, that the parties of court and country, or, as they are usually called Tories and Whigs, were first regularly formed; parties which have ever since subsisted, and which, while they sometimes seem to threaten the total dissolution of the goverment, are the real causes of its vigour and stability. All those who favoured the hierarchy of the church, or the prerogative of the crown, adhered to the former; the Puritans, to a man, engaged in the latter.

Ever since the first origin of this sect, through the whole reign of Elizabeth as well as of James, puritanical principles had been under-

* A. D. 1621.

underſtood in a double ſenſe, and expreſſed opinions friendly, both to civil and eccleſiaſtical liberty. And as the court, in order to diſcourage all parliamentary oppoſition, affixed the name of Puritans to its antagoniſts; the religious Puritans readily adopted this diſtinction, which was ſo advantageous to them, and which confounded their cauſe with the patriots or country party.

Though the commons were fully determined to ſecure and enlarge their own priviledges, and to circumſcribe and limit the exhorbitant power of the crown, they yet diſcovered, in the begining of the ſeſſion, nothing but the moſt perfect duty and ſubmiſſion; and they ſeemed willing to ſacrifice every thing, in order to preſerve a good underſtanding with their ſovereign.

They would ſuffer no mention to be made of the new cuſtoms or impoſitions, which had been ſo warmly conteſted in the former parliament: ſome, indeed, ventured to complain of the impriſonment of the members of that parliament; but by the authority of the more grave and moderate part of the houſe, that grievance was buried in oblivion; and being told, that the king had ſupplied his ſon-in-law with conſiderable ſums of money, they unanimouſly granted him two ſubſidies; and that too, before

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Though the commons were fully determined to secure and enlarge their own priviledges, and to circumscribe and limit the exhorbitant power of the crown, they yet discovered, in the begining of the session, nothing but the most perfect duty and submission; and they seemed willing to sacrifice every thing, in order to preserve a good understanding with their sovereign.

They would suffer no mention to be made of the new customs or impositions, which had been so warmly contested in the former parliament: some, indeed, ventured to complain of the imprisonment of the members of that parliament; but by the authority of the more grave and moderate part of the house, that grievance was buried in oblivion; and being told, that the king had supplied his son-in-law with considerable sums of money, they unanimously granted him two subsidies; and that too, before

they had entered upon any other buſineſs, contrary to the practice frequently obſerved by their predeceſſors.

They then proceeded, but in a very calm and deliberate manner, to examine and redreſs the public grievances. They found that a patent had been granted to Sir Giles Mompeſſon, and Sir Francis Michel, for licenſing inns and ale-houſes; that great ſums of money had been extorted, under pretext of theſe licences; and that ſuch innkeepers, as had preſumed to continue their buſineſs, without complying with the exhorbitant demands of the patentees, had been ſeverely puniſhed by fines, impriſonments, and other penalties.

The ſame perſons had obtained a patent, which they enjoyed in common with Sir George Villiers, brother to Buckingham, for the ſole making and vending of gold and ſilver lace, and had been inveſted with very extraordinary powers for ſecuring the monopoly: they were armed with authority, to enter and ſearch private houſes, for the diſcovery of contraband goods; and even to puniſh, at their own will and diſcretion, the makers, importers, and retailers, of ſuch commodities. Many had been ruined by this cruel juriſdiction; and it appeared, that the lace, which had been made by the

the patentees, was universally adulterated, and was composed more of copper than of the precious metals.

These grievances the commons laid before his majesty; and they met with a very gracious and favourable reception. He even thanked them for their friendly information; and professed his sorrow and regret, that such abuses, unknowingly to him, should have been so long permitted. "I "assure you," said he, "had I heard of "these things before, I would have done "the office of a just king, and out of par- "liament have punished them as severely, "and perhaps more than you now intend "to do." A sentence was passed for the punishment of Michel and Mompesson.

The latter had made his escape from the kingdom; but his estate was confiscated, he was degraded from the honour of knighthood, declared an outlaw, and condemned to perpetual banishment. The former was likewise degraded from his rank, fined a thousand pounds, imprisoned for life, and carried on horseback, with his face to the tail, through the public streets of London. Villiers was screened from the like fate by his absence, having been purposely sent abroad on some public employment; and, before his return, his brother Buckingham

found means to secure him against any future enquiry.

Encouraged by this success, the commons carried their researches into other abuses of a still more delicate and important nature. The seals were, at that time, in the hands of the celebrated Bacon, created lord Verulam, and viscount St. Albans; a man equally admired for the greatness of his genius, and beloved for his courteous and affable demeanour. His want of œconomy, and his indulgence to servants, had involved him in debt; and, in order to supply his necessities, he had been tempted to take bribes, and that, in a very open manner, from suitors in chancery.

'Tis affirmed, that, notwithstanding this enormous abuse, he had still, in the seat of justice, maintained the integrity of a judge, and had given such just and equitable decrees, that none of them afterwards were ever questioned or reversed. Complaints, however, rose only the louder on that account, and at last reached the commons, who presented an impeachment against him in the house of peers.

The chancellor, conscious of guilt, implored the mercy of his judges, and endeavoured, by a general confession, to avoid the shame of a stricter enquiry. But

the

BACON Lord *VERULAM.*

Engravd for Rider's History of England

the lords were inexorable; and inſiſted on a full acknowledgement of all his corruptions. He owned twenty-eight articles; and was ſo very particular that he mentioned a dozen of gold buttons which his ſervant had taken as a gift from a ſuitor.

He was condemned to pay a fine of forty thouſand pounds, to be impriſoned in the tower during the king's pleaſure, to be for ever incapable of any office, place, or employment; and never again to ſit in parliament, or come within the verge of the court.

This dreadful ſentence he ſurvived five years; and being in a little time reſtored to liberty, his genius, yet unbroken by calamities, ſupported itſelf amidſt involved circumſtances and a depreſſed ſpirit, and ſhone out in literary productions, which, notwithſtanding all his failings, have made him be juſtly conſidered as the glory and ornament of his age and nation.

The commons ſtill proceeded in their laudable career, and carried their ſcrutiny into many grievances, which, though of no great conſequence, could not be touched without ſenſibly affecting the king and his miniſters. The prerogative ſeemed each moment to be attacked; the king's authority, in every article, was diſputed; and James, who was willing to rectify the abuſes

of his power, would by no means ſuffer his power itſelf to be either queſtioned or denied. After the houſe, therefore, had ſat near ſix months, without bringing any buſineſs of importance to a final concluſion, the king determined, under pretence of the advanced ſeaſon, to interrupt their proceedings; and he ſent them word, that he intended, in a few days, to adjourn them till next winter,

The commons, eager to compleat the ſalutary work of redreſſing all the public grievances, applied to the lords, and intreated them to join in a petition for delaying the adjournment; but the upper houſe refuſed their concurrence.

The king conſidered this ſcheme of a joint petition as an attempt to compel him to compliance: he thanked the peers for the regard they had ſhown to his prerogative, and told them, that, if it was their requeſt, he would defer the adjournment, but would not pay the ſame compliment to the lower houſe. And thus, in theſe great national tranſactions, the ſame peeviſhneſs, which, in private diſputes, often raiſes a quarrel from ſmall beginnings, occaſioned a coldneſs and diſguſt between the king and the commons.

During

During the intermiſſion of parliament, the king employed every expedient to gain the affections of the people, and allay the riſing ill humour of their repreſentatives. He had voluntarily propoſed to the parliament to limit his own prerogative, and to reſign his power of granting any monopolies for the future. He now revoked all the patents of that kind, and remedied every article of grievance, to the number of thirty-ſeven, which had ever been mentioned in the houſe of commons.

But all theſe conceſſions were not ſufficient to appeaſe that ſpirit of diſcontent which now appeared in the nation, and which was ſtill farther increaſed by another act of imprudence which the king committed. He had been ſo fooliſh as to impriſon Sir Edwin Sandys, and Mr. Selden, without any known cauſe, beſides their zeal and activity in performing their duty as members of parliament. The events in Germany too, when joined to the king's timid and irreſolute conduct, contributed greatly to inflame that jealouſy of honour and religion, with which the people were now poſſeſſed.

This year the Elector Palatine was put under the ban of the Empire; and the duke of Bavaria was commiſſioned to execute

cute the ſentence againſt him. The Upper Palatinate was, in a little time, ſubdued by that prince; and meaſures were taking in the Empire for inveſting him with the electoral dignity, of which the Palatine was deprived. Frederic now lived, with his numerous family, in poverty and diſtreſs, either in Holland, or at Sedan, with his uncle the duke of Bouillon: and throughout all the new conqueſts, in both the Palatinates, as well as in Bohemia, Auſtria, Luſatia, the Auſtrian armies exerciſed the moſt cruel and ſhocking barbarities againſt the profeſſors of the Proteſtant religion.

The parliament was no ſooner re-aſſembled, than the commons took all theſe affairs into conſideration. They drew up a remonſtrance, which they propoſed to preſent to his majeſty.

They there repreſented, that the growing power of the houſe of Auſtria threatened the general liberties of Europe; that the progreſs of the Catholic religion in England begot the moſt alarming apprehenſions, leſt it ſhould once more gain an aſcendant in the kingdom; that the king's lenity towards the profeſſors of that religion had increaſed their arrogance and preſumption; that the uncontrouled conqueſts made

made by the Auſtrian family, mightily raiſed the expectations of the Engliſh Papiſts; and eſpecially, that the proſpect of the Spaniſh match inſpired them with the moſt ſanguine hopes of procuring, if not the final re-eſtabliſhment, at leaſt the entire toleration of their religion.

They, therefore, beſought his majeſty that he would immediately undertake the defence of the Palatine, and ſupport him by force of arms; that he would declare war againſt Spain, whoſe arms and riches were the chief bulwark of the Catholic intereſt in Europe; that he would engage in no negociation for the marriage of his ſon but with a Proteſtant princeſs; that the children of Popiſh recuſants ſhould be taken from their parents, and committed to the care of Proteſtant teachers and ſchoolmaſters; and that the fines and confiſcations, to which the Catholics were by law ſubject, ſhould be exacted with the utmoſt rigour.

By this ſpirited remonſtrance, the commons overturned, at once, all the king's favourite maxims of government; his cautions and pacific meaſures, his indulgence towards the Catholics, and his attachment to the Spaniſh match, from which he expected ſuch mighty advantages. But what offend-

offended him most, was, their seeming invasion of his prerogative, and their presuming, under colour of advice, to direct his conduct in those transactions, which had ever been allowed to belong solely to the management and direction of the prince.

He was, at that time, absent at Newmarket; but he was no sooner informed of the intended remonstrance of the commons, than he sent a letter to the speaker, in which he severely reprimanded the members, for interfering with matters far above their reach and capacity; and he strictly discharged them to meddle with any thing that concerned his government or deep matters of state, and particularly not to touch on his son's marriage with the daughter of Spain, nor to asperse the character of that king, or any other of his friends and confederates.

To overawe them still more, he mentioned the imprisonment of Sir Edwin Sandys; and though he alledged, that the confinement of that member had not been owing to any offence committed in the house, he yet affirmed, that he thought he had a right to punish every misdemeanour in parliament, as well during its continuance as after its dissolution; and that he was fully determined, for the future, to chastize the presumption of any man whose insolent be-

behaviour ſhould afford the leaſt cauſe of offence.

This imperious letter produced the effect which might naturally have been expected: the commons were incenſed, not intimidated. Senſible of their own popularity, and of the bent of the nation towards a war with the Catholics abroad, and the ſuppreſſion of Popery at home, they little feared the menaces of a prince who was deſtitute of all military force, and whoſe peaceable temper would, in any event, hinder him from carrying his threats into execution.

In a new remonſtrance, therefore, they ſtill enforced their former remonſtrance and advice, and they aſſerted, that they had a right to interpoſe with their council in all affairs of ſtate; that it was their ancient and undoubted privilege, and an inheritance handed down to them from their anceſtors, to enjoy entire freedom of ſpeech in their debates on public buſineſs; and that, if any member abuſed this liberty, the houſe, and they alone, who were witneſſes of his offence, were entitled to inflict a puniſhment upon him.

So reſolute and determined an anſwer was but ill fitted to pacify the king. It is ſaid, that, when he was informed of the approach of the committee, who were to preſent it, he ordered twelve chairs to be brought,

brought, for that so many kings were a coming.

His answer was short and peremptory. He told them, that their remonstrance looked rather like a declaration of war than an address of dutiful subjects; that their pretension to intermeddle in all state affairs without exception, was such an extent of power, as none of their ancestors, even under the weakest princes, had ever presumed to arrogate: that public transactions depended on a complication of views and intelligence of which they were totally ignorant; and that they could not give a better proof of their wisdom, as well as duty, than by confining themselves within their proper sphere: that they ought to remember the Latin proverb, *Ne sutor ultra crepidam*; and that in any business which belonged to his prerogative, they had no right to interpose with their advice, except when he was pleased to ask it. And he concluded with these remarkable words; "and though we cannot allow of your stile, "in mentioning your ancient and undoubted right and inheritance, but would rather have wished, that ye had said, that "your privileges were derived from the "grace and permission of our ancestors and "us, (for most of them grew from prece-

"dents,

" dents, which ſhews rather a toleration " than an inheritance) yet we are pleaſed " to give you our royal aſſurance, that as " long as you contain yourſelves within " the limits of your duty, we will be as " careful to maintain and preſerve your " lawful liberties and privileges as ever any " of our predeceſſors were, nay, as to pre- " ſerve our own royal prerogative."

If the commons had entertained any doubt of the king's arbitrary intentions, he had now given them ſufficient proof. They ſaw their title to every privilege, if not plainly denied, at leaſt conſidered as very precarious. It might be forfeited by abuſe, and the king alledged, that they had already abuſed it.

They reſolved, therefore, to guard theſe invaluable liberties, which had been tranſmitted to them by their progenitors. They drew up a proteſtation, in which they inſiſted on all their former claims for freedom of ſpeech, and an unbounded authority to interpoſe with their advice and council. And they affirmed, " that the liberties, " franchiſes, privileges and juriſdictions of " parliament are the ancient and undoubt- " ed birthright and inheritance of the ſub- " jects of England,"

The king, hearing of these vigorous proceedings in the house, hastened to town. He sent immediately for the journal of the house of commons; and, with his own hand, before the council, he tore out this protestation; and ordered his reasons to be inserted in the council-book.

He was doubly offended, he said, at the protestation of the lower house; both on account of the matter which it contained, and the manner in which it was formed. It was tumultuously voted, he alledged, at a late hour; and it was conceived in such vague and ambiguous terms, as might furnish a pretence for the most exorbitant claims, and for the most unwarrantable encroachments on his prerogative.

The meeting of the parliament after so violent a breach, might have been attended with the most dangerous consequences. While men's minds were in such a ferment, no business could be transacted with any temper or moderation. The king, therefore, prorogued the parliament, and soon after dissolved it by proclamation; and he endeavoured to satisfy the public with regard to every part of his conduct.

The leading members of the house, Coke, Philips, Selden, Pym, and Mallory, were committed to prison: Digges, Crew, Rich,

Rich, and Perrot, were exiled to Ireland, on pretence of executing ſome public commiſſion. Sir John Saville, a member of great popularity, and a zealous oppoſer of the court, was made comptroller of the houſhold, a privy-councellor, and ſoon after a baron; and this, perhaps, is the firſt inſtance, in the whole hiſtory of England, of any man's being advanced on account of his parliamentary intereſt, and his oppoſition to the meaſures of the ſovereign.

The king was apprehenſive, that the ſame factions, which had begun in parliament, would ſoon be propagated through the whole kingdom. He, therefore, publiſhed repeated proclamations, forbidding all perſons to talk of ſtate-affairs. But ſuch proclamations, if they had any effect, ſerved rather to increaſe the curioſity of the public: in every company or ſociety the late tranſactions were canvaſſed with the utmoſt eagerneſs and warmth; and by theſe means the different parties were inflamed againſt each other to the higheſt degree of rage and animoſity.

Meanwhile James continued his fruitleſs negociations with regard to the recovery of the palatinate.* He diſpatched lord Digby, as his ambaſſador, to the emperor, deſiring a ceſſa-

* A. D. 1622.

a ceſſation of hoſtilities; and the miniſter was referred to the duke of Bavaria, who commanded the Auſtrian armies.

The duke of Bavaria told him, that it was altogether unneceſſary to form any treaty for that purpoſe. "Hoſtilities are "already ceaſed," ſaid he, "and I doubt "not but I ſhall be able to prevent their "revival, by keeping firm poſſeſſion of the "palatinate, till a final accommodation "ſhall be made between the contending "parties."

Notwithſtanding this inſult, James endeavoured to renew the negociation with the emperor; and the conferences were opened at Bruſſels, under the mediation of the archduke Albert, and, after his death, which happened about this time, under that of the Infanta: but the commiſſioners had no ſooner entered on the ſubject, than it appeared, that theſe princes had no power to determine the controverſy. Schwartzenbourg, the Imperial miniſter, was expected at London; and it was hoped, that he would be inveſted with more ample authority: his commiſſion referred entirely to the conference at Bruſſels.

The king was now convinced, that his applications were purpoſely eluded by the emperor; but as he had no other means of carrying

ing his point, and it ſeemed the intereſt of his ſon-in-law to keep alive his pretenſions, he ſtill reſolved to attend Ferdinand through all his ſhifts and evaſions. Nor did he entirely deſpair, even when the Imperial diet at Ratiſbon, by the influence, or rather authority of the emperor, though contrary to the proteſtation of Saxony and all the other Proteſtant princes and cities, transferred the electoral dignity from the Palatine to the duke of Bavaria.

Meanwhile the Palatine exerted his utmoſt endeavours in order to recover his dominions. Three armies were raiſed in Germany by his authority, under three commanders, duke Chriſtian of Brunſwick, the prince of Baden, and count Mansfeldt. The two former generals were defeated by count Tilly and the Imperialiſts: the third, though greatly inferior to the enemy in numbers, ſtill continued the war; but with no equal ſupplies of money, either from the Palatine or the king of England.

It was chiefly by plunder and free quarters in the palatinate, that he maintained his army. As the Auſtrians were duly paid, they obſerved a more ſtrict diſcipline; and James began to fear, that ſo unequal a conteſt, beſides deſolating the Palatine's hereditary dominions, would terminate in a to-

tal alienation of the people from their ancient ſovereign, by whom they were pillaged, and in an attachment to their new maſter, by whom they were protected.

He therefore adviſed his ſon-in-law to withdraw his forces under pretence of duty and ſubmiſſion to the emperor: and accordingly count Mansfeldt was diſmiſſed from the Palatine's ſervice; and that famous general retired with his army into the Low-Countries, where he was received into the pay of the United Provinces.

To ſhew in what extreme contempt James's negociations were held abroad, there is a pleaſant ſtory related by all hiſtorians, and which it may not be improper to mention. In a farce, acted at Bruſſels, a courier was introduced, carrying the doleful news that the palatinate would ſoon be wreſted from the emperor; ſo numerous were the ſuccours, which, from all quarters, were haſtening to the relief of the expelled elector: the king of Denmark had engaged to ſupply him with a hundred thouſand pickled herrings, the Dutch with a hundred thouſand butter-boxes, and the king of England with an hundred thouſand ambaſſadors. On other occaſions he was painted with a ſcabbard, without a ſword; or with a ſword, which ſeveral perſons were

endeavouring in vain to unſheathe. He was likewiſe exhibited with his empty pockets turned inſide out. In a theatrical piece at Antwerp, the electreſs queen of Bohemia was repreſented as a poor Iriſh trull, with her hair hanging about her ears, her child at her back, and her father carrying the cradle behind her.

It was not from negociations with the emperor or the duke of Bavaria, that James expected the reſtoration of the Palatine; his eyes were entirely fixed on Spain; and if he could accompliſh his ſon's marriage with the Infanta, he fondly imagined, that, after ſo cloſe an alliance, this other point might be eaſily ſettled.

The proceedings of that court being naturally ſlow and dilatory, it was extremely difficult for a prince of ſo little ſagacity to diſcover whether the obſtacles, which occurred, were real or affected; and he was ſurprized to find, that, after negociating five years, on ſo ſimple a matter, he was ſtill as diſtant from his purpoſe as ever.

The pope's diſpenſation being neceſſary for the marriage of the Infanta with a Proteſtant prince, the king of Spain had engaged to procure that preliminary; and he was thereby enabled to retard or forward the marriage, as beſt ſuited his own intereſt,

intereſt, and, at the ſame time, to conceal his artifices from the court of England.

In order to remove every impediment, James diſpatched Digby, ſoon after, dignified with the title of earl of Briſtol, as his ambaſſador to Philip the fourth, who had lately ſucceeded his father on the throne of Spain. He ſecretly employed Gage as his agent at Rome; and hearing that the difference of religion was the chief, if not the only obſtacle which retarded the marriage, he determined to ſoften that objection as much as poſſible.

He publiſhed a proclamation for releaſing all Popiſh recuſants, who were confined; and it was daily expected, that he would prohibit, for the future, the execution of the penal laws enacted againſt them. This ſtep, he knew, would give great offence to all his ſubjects; he therefore took care to offer any apology; and he even endeavoured to impute it to his great zeal for the Reformed religion.

He had, he ſaid, been uſing his intereſt with all foreign princes in favour of the diſtreſſed Proteſtants, and was ſtill anſwered, that no indulgence could be granted them, till he ſhould be pleaſed to ſhew ſome greater lenity to the Engliſh Catholics. This pretence, however, was

far

far from quieting the fears, or allaying the murmurs of the people, who juſtly apprehended the fatal conſequences, ſhould ever the Catholics obtain a perfect toleration.

But whatever umbrage this ſtep might give to the nation, it anſwered the end which the king had in view. The ſame religious motives, which had hitherto made the Spaniards ſo backward to conclude the marriage, now induced them to promote it with the utmoſt zeal and activity. By its means, they hoped, the Engliſh Catholics would be indulged with a free toleration; and the Infanta would be the happy inſtrument of procuring to the church ſome tranquillity, after the ſevere perſecutions which it had ſo long ſuffered.

The earl of Briſtol, a miniſter of great abilities, and who had formerly diſapproved of all alliance with Spain, was now convinced of the ſincerity of that court; and he was ready to felicitate the king on the entire accompliſhment of his views and projects. A daughter of Spain, whom he repreſents as extremely amiable, would ſoon, he ſaid, be conducted into England, and would bring with her an immenſe fortune of two millions,* a ſum four times greater

* Theſe two millions were of pieces of eight, amounting to ſix hundred thouſand pounds.

greater than Spain had ever given with any other princeſs.

But what was of more importance to the king's honour and happineſs, Briſtol regarded this match as a certain ſign of the Palatine's reſtoration; nor would Philip, he thought, have ever beſtowed his ſiſter and ſo large a portion, under the proſpect of engaging, next day, in a war with England. So perfect was his intelligence, that the moſt ſecret councils of the Spaniards, he aſſerts, had never eſcaped his obſervation; and he found, that they had, all along, regarded the marriage of the Infanta and the reſtitution of the Palatinate as meaſures inſeparably connected.

Every previous ſtep being therefore adjuſted, nought was wanting to the concluſion of the marriage, but the pope's diſpenſation, which might be eſteemed as a mere formality. The king, juſtified by ſucceſs, now triumphed in his pacific councils, and boaſted of his ſuperior wiſdom and ſagacity; when all his flattering proſpects were ruined by the raſhneſs of a man, whom he had raiſed from a private ſtation, to be the curſe of himſelf, of his family, and people.

Ever

Ever ſince the fall of Somerſet, Buckingham had ruled the kingdom with unlimited ſway; and by his haughty and overbearing behaviour, had incurred the hatred, not only of ſome of the greateſt and moſt ancient nobility, but even of the prince of Wales himſelf. Deſirous, however, of repairing his breach with Charles, and jealous, at the ſame time, of the credit acquired by Briſtol in the Spaniſh negociation, he reſolved to employ a method, by which he would, at once, gratify both theſe inclinations.*

He repreſented to the prince, that perſons of his high rank were peculiarly unfortunate in their marriage, the chief circumſtance upon which the happineſs of life depended; and commonly received into their arms a bride, unknown to them, and to whom they were unknown; not endeared by any previous courtſhip, not obliged by any good offices; wooed by treaties alone, by negociations, by political intereſts: that however intelligent the Infanta, ſhe muſt ſtill conſider herſelf as a melancholy victim of ſtate, and could not but think with regret of that day when ſhe was to enter the bed of a ſtranger;

* A. D. 1623.

ger; and passing into a foreign country and a new family, bid an everlasting adieu to her father's house and her native land: that it was in the prince's power to mitigate all these hardships, and lay such an obligation on her, as would engage the coldest heart, as would attach the most indifferent temper: that his journey to Madrid would be a noble piece of gallantry, which would equal all the fictions of Spanish romance, and suiting the amorous and enterprizing spirit of that nation, must introduce him to the princess under the agreeable character of a fond lover rather than of a stately husband: that the negociation, with regard to the Palatinate, which had hitherto languished in the hands of ministers, would soon be completed by so illustrious an agent, assisted by the mediation and entreaties of the grateful Infanta: that the Spanish generosity, moved by such an instance of trust and confidence, would be induced to make greater concessions than could be expected from political views and motives: and that he would quickly return to the king with the glory of having restored the unhappy Palatine, by the same enterprize, which procured him the affections and the person of the Spanish princess.

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The young prince, naturally of a warm and ſanguine complexion, was charmed with theſe generous and romantic ideas. He immediately agreed to ſolicit the permiſſion of his father. They choſe the time of his kindeſt and moſt jovial humour; and more by the importunity of their addreſs, than by the force of their reaſons, they extorted a haſty and unguarded conſent to their undertaking. And having obtained his promiſe to keep their deſign ſecret, they left him, in order to prepare for their journey.

No ſooner was the king alone, than he began to reflect on all the conſequences which might attend this hazardous project. He conſidered, that, however willing the world might be to excuſe this ſally of youth in the prince, they would never forgive himſelf, who, at his years, and with his experience, could entruſt his only ſon, the heir of his crown, the prop of his age, in the hands of foreigners, without ſo much as affording him the frail ſecurity of a ſafe-conduct: that, if the Spaniſh monarch was ſincere in his profeſſions, a few months muſt complete the treaty of marriage, and bring the Infanta into England; if he was not ſincere, the folly of putting the prince in his power, was the more

egregious and apparent: that Philip, when poſſeſſed of ſo valuable a pledge, might heighten his demands, and inſiſt on more ſevere and intolerable conditions: and that the folly of the enterprize was ſo evident, that the iſſue, however ſucceſsful, could never juſtify the attempt; and if unfortunate, it would expoſe him to the contempt of his own ſubjects, and to the deriſion of all poſterity.

Haraſſed with theſe reflexions, ſo ſoon as the prince and Buckingham returned for their diſpatches, he acquainted them with the reaſons which had made him change his reſolution; and he begged they would give over all thoughts of ſuch a ridiculous adventure. The prince bore the diſappointment with ſorrowful ſubmiſſion and ſilent tears; but Buckingham talked in a haughty and imperious tone, which he had ever found to ſucceed beſt with his too eaſy maſter.

He told him, that, for the future, no body would give credit to any thing he ſaid, when he had retracted a promiſe which he had ſo ſolemnly given; that he plainly perceived this change of reſolution proceeded from another breach of his word, in imparting the matter to ſome raſcal, who had ſuggeſted to him thoſe pi-

tiful

tiful reaſons, which he had adduced, and he doubted not but he ſhould ſoon diſcover who had been his counſellor; and that if he broke his engagement, it would be ſuch an affront to the prince, who had now ſet his heart upon the journey, after his majeſty's approbation, that he could never forget it, nor forgive any man who had been the cauſe of ſuch a cruel diſappointment.

The king ſwore with great warmth, that he had diſcloſed the matter to no perſon whatever; and finding himſelf attacked, as well by the boiſterous importunities of Buckingham, as by the earneſt entreaties of his ſon, whoſe applications, had hitherto, been always dutiful and ſubmiſſive; he had again the weakneſs to aſſent to their intended journey.

It was reſolved, that Sir Francis Cottington alone, the prince's ſecretary, and Endymion Porter, gentleman of his bedchamber, ſhould attend them; and the former being at that time in the antichamber, he was immediately called in by the king's order.

"Cottington," ſaid the king, "you "have always been a faithful ſervant, "and therefore I am now to entruſt you "with an affair of the greateſt import-

" ance, which you are not, on your life, " to reveal to any other perſon. Here," continued he, " is baby Charles and Sten- " ny" (ſuch were the ridiculous appella- tions by which he always diſtinguiſhed the prince and Buckingham) " who have a " great mind to go poſt into Spain, to " fetch home the Infanta: they will have " but two more in company, and have " choſen you for one. What think you " of the journey?"

Sir Francis, who was a man of wiſdom and experience, and had lived ſome years in Spain as the king's agent, perceived at once all the obvious objections to ſuch an enterprize, and ſcrupled not to explain them. The king threw himſelf upon his bed, and exclaimed, " I told you this be- " fore," and fell into a new paſſion and lamentation, crying that he was undone, and that he ſhould loſe baby Charles.

The prince diſcovered, by his counte- nance, how much he was diſpleaſed with Cottington's diſcourſe; but Buckingham broke into a violent tranſport againſt him. The king, he told him, enquired only a- bout the journey and the manner of tra- velling; circumſtances of which he might be a competent judge, having gone the road ſo often by poſt: but he, without be-

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ing deſired, had the arrogance to interpoſe with his advice, in matters of ſtate, and againſt his maſter; an inſtance of preſumption which he ſhould repent ſo long as he lived.

He added a thouſand other reproaches, which put the poor king into a new agony, on account of a ſervant, who, he perceived, would ſuffer for anſwering him honeſtly. Upon which he ſaid, with ſome warmth; "Nay, by God, Stenny, you are much to "blame for uſing him ſo: he anſwered me "directly to the queſtions which I aſked "him, and very honeſtly and wiſely; and "yet, you know, he ſaid no more than I "told you before he was called in." Nevertheleſs, after all this paſſion and vehemence on both ſides, James renewed his conſent; and preparations were made for their immediate departure. Theſe circumſtances, though trivial in themſelves, are yet ſo characteriſtical of the perſons deſcribed, that we have judged them worthy of a particular relation.

The prince and Buckingham, with their two companions, and Sir Richard Graham, maſter of the horſe to Buckingham paſſed, diſguiſed and undiſcovered through France; and they even ventured into a court-ball at Paris, where Charles had an opportunity of

ſeeing the princeſs Henrietta, whom he afterwards married, and who was then in the bloom of youth and beauty. In eleven days, from the time of their leaving London, they reached Madrid, and ſurprized every body by their unexpected arrival.

The Spaniſh monarch immediately waited on Charles, expreſſed the grateful ſenſe he had of the confidence repoſed in him, and made the warmeſt proteſtations of a correſpondent friendſhip and confidence. He employed every expedient to ſhow the reſpect which he had for his royal gueſt.

He gave him a golden key which opened all his apartments, that the prince might, without introduction, have admittance to him at all hours: he gave him the right-hand on every occaſion, except in the apartments allotted to Charles; for there, he ſaid, the prince was at home: Charles was introduced into the palace with the ſame pomp and ceremony which accompanied the coronation of the Spaniſh monarchs: the council were ordered to pay the ſame deference to him as to the king himſelf: Olivarez, though one of the grandees of Spain, who are always covered before their own king, would not put on his hat in the prince's preſence: all the priſons of Spain were opened, and all the priſoners reſtored

to

to their liberty, as if an event, the moſt fortunate and honourable, had happened to the kingdom: and every ſumptuary law, with regard to dreſs, was ſuſpended during his abode in Spain. He was only allowed, however, to ſee the Infanta in public; the Spaniſh notions of decency being ſo ſtrict, as not to admit of any other intercourſe till the pope's diſpenſation ſhould arrive.

Notwithſtanding the violent apprehenſions which had been entertained of the dangerous conſequences of this adventure, the Spaniards took no advantage of the prince's preſence to impoſe any harder terms of treaty: they were only prompted, by their pious zeal, to deſire ſome greater conceſſions in religious articles; but, on the oppoſition of Briſtol, accompanied with ſome reproaches, they immediately deſiſted.

The pope, however, was no ſooner informed of the prince's arrival at Madrid, than he added ſome new clauſes to the diſpenſation; and it became neceſſary to ſend them to London, that they might be there ratified by the king. This treaty, which was ſoon after publiſhed, conſiſted of ſeveral articles, chiefly relating to the exerciſe of the Catholic religion, by the Infanta and her family.

The

The moſt exceptionable article, was that in which the king engaged that the children ſhould be educated by the princeſs till ten years of age. This condition could only be ſtipulated with a view of imbuing their minds with Catholic prejudices; and tho' ſo tender an age ſeemed little ſuſceptible of any ſtrong impreſſions, yet the ſame motive which prompted the pope to inſert it, ſhould have induced the king to reject it. Beſides the public treaty, there were ſeveral private articles to which the king ſwore; and in which he promiſed to ſuſpend the execution of the penal laws againſt the Catholics, to procure a repeal of them in parliament, and to tolerate the Popiſh religion in private houſes. Theſe articles were never made public; and their publication would doubtleſs have been productive of the moſt violent murmurs.

Mean while, Gregory the fifteenth, who granted the diſpenſation, died; and Urban the eighth ſucceeded in his place. Upon this event, the nuncio refuſed to deliver the diſpenſation, until it ſhould be confirmed by Urban; and that crafty pontiff deferred the performance of that formality, in hopes, that, during the prince's reſidence in Spain, ſome means might be found to effect his converſion.

The

The prince, chagrined at this delay, expreſſed his deſire to return. On the firſt hint, he obtained the permiſſion of the Spaniſh court; and Philip graced his departure with all the circumſtances of civility and reſpect which had been paid him on his arrival. He even erected a pillar on the ſpot where they parted, as a monument of their friendſhip; and the prince, having ſworn to the performance of the articles, ſet out on his journey, and embarked on board the Engliſh fleet at St. Andero.

The character of Charles, compoſed of decency, modeſty, and reſerve; virtues ſo agreeable to the manners of the Spaniards; the unbounded confidence which he had repoſed in their honour; the generous and romantic gallantry which he had ſhown to their princeſs; all theſe circumſtances, added to his youth and handſome figure, had recommended him extremely to the whole court of Madrid, and had rendered him the object of general eſteem and regard.

But as much as the prince was beloved and reſpected, ſo much was Buckingham deſpiſed and hated. His behaviour, made up of pert vivacity and rude familiarity; his violent tranſports of paſſion; his indecent freedoms with the prince; his ſhameful and diſſolute pleaſures; his haughty, arro-

arrogant, and overbearing temper, which he either could not or would not diſguiſe; qualities, like theſe, could, moſt of them, be eſteemed no where; but, to the Spaniards, were peculiarly odious and hateful.

They could not help expreſſing their ſurprize, that ſuch a giddy and hair-brained youth could preſume to interpoſe in a negociation, now brought to a happy period by ſo able a miniſter as Briſtol, and could dare to arrogate to himſelf the whole merit of the treaty.

They bewailed the fate of the Infanta, who muſt ſuffer the approach of ſuch a man, whoſe temerity ſeemed to regard no laws, human or divine. And when they ſaw that he had the inſolence to affront their prime miniſter, the Condé duke of Olivarez; every one who was deſirous of gaining the favour of the Spaniſh, endeavoured to ſhow their averſion to the Engliſh favourite.

The duke of Buckingham told Olivarez, that he had the higheſt eſteem for the Spaniſh nation, and the king of Spain; that he would heartily concur in every meaſure which could ſtrengthen the friendſhip between them and England; and that he would exert his utmoſt endeavours to forward

ward the prince's marriage with the Infanta.

But he added, with a ſincerity equally inſolent and imprudent, "With regard to you, "Sir, in particular, you muſt not conſider "me as your friend, but muſt expect from "me all the ill offices I can poſſible do "you." The Condé duke replied, with a becoming dignity, that he willingly accepted the challenge; and, on theſe terms, the favourites parted.

Buckingham, ſenſible that he had incurred the hatred of the Spaniards, and dreading the influence which that nation would naturally have after the arrival of the Infanta, determined to employ all his credit, in order to defeat the marriage. By what arguments he could perſuade the prince to offer ſuch an affront to the Spaniſh nation, from whom he had received ſuch generous treatment; by what arts he could diſguiſe the ingratitude and imprudence of ſuch a meaſure; theſe are circumſtances which have never tranſpired to the public.

It only appears, that his imperious and overbearing character had acquired, what it ever after preſerved, a total aſcendant over the mind of the modeſt Charles; and, when the prince departed from Madrid, he was firmly reſolved, notwithſtanding all his

his profeſſions, to break off the treaty with Spain.

It is not probable that Buckingham prevailed ſo eaſily with James, to relinquiſh a project, which during ſo many years, had been the object of his wiſhes, and which he had now brought to a happy and ſucceſsful iſſue. A war with Spain, and the loſs of two millions, were proſpects by no means agreeable to this pacific and neceſſitous monarch: but ſeeing his only ſon averſe to a match which had always been condemned by his people and his parliament, he yeilded to difficulties which he had not courage nor reſolution ſufficient to ſurmount.

The prince and Buckingham, therefore, on their arrival at London, undertook the ſole management of the negociation; and it was their buſineſs to find expedients by which they could excuſe their violation of the treaty.

Though the reſtitution of the palatinate had ever been regarded by James as a natural or neceſſary conſequence of the Spaniſh alliance, he had ever diſcharged his miniſters from inſiſting on it as a preliminary article to the concluſion of the marriage treaty. He conſidered, that that principality was now in the poſſeſſion of the emperor and the duke of Bavaria; and it was no longer

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in the king of Spain's power, by a ſingle ſtroke of his pen, to reſtore it to its ancient proprietor.

The intimate connection of Spain with theſe princes, would induce Philip, he thought, to ſoften ſo diſagreable a demand, by every art of negociation; and many points muſt, of neceſſity, be ſettled, before ſuch an important object could be fully accompliſhed. It was ſufficient, in James's opinion, if the Spaniſh court, could for the preſent, be perſuaded to give a poſitive promiſe; and apprehending farther delays of the marriage, ſo long and ſo eagerly expected, he was determined to depend on the reſult of future councils and treaties, for the final reſtoration of the Palatine.

This whole ſyſtem of politics was now overturned by Buckingham; and every principle upon which the treaty had hitherto been conducted, was entirely ſubverted. After many fruitleſs artifices had been uſed to retard or defeat the concluſion of the marriage; Briſtol was ordered not to deliver the proxy which had been left in his hands, nor to complete the marriage, till ſecurity was given for the full reſtitution of the palatinate.

Philip comprehended the meaning of this language. He had been informed of the

diſguſt conceived by Buckingham; and, judging him a man capable of ſacrificing, to his own ungovernable paſſions, the greateſt intereſts of his king and country, he had ſuſpected, that the unbounded ambition of that favourite would be employed to foment a quarrel between the two nations.

Reſolved, however, to throw the blame of the rupture entirely on the Engliſh, he gave to the earl of Briſtol a written promiſe, by which he engaged to procure the reſtoration of the palatinate, either by treaty, or by any other poſſible means; and when he found that that conceſſion was utterly diſregarded, he ordered the Infanta to lay aſide the title of princeſs of Wales, which ſhe had borne ever ſince the arrival of the diſpenſation from Rome, and to drop the ſtudy of the Engliſh language, which ſhe had been learning for a conſiderable time; and thinking, that ſuch precipitate councils as now influenced the court of England, would not ſtop at the violation of the marriage-treaty, he ordered preparations for war to be made throughout all his dominions.

The king, having broke with Spain, was obliged to adopt new meaſures, and, without the aſſiſtance of parliament, no ſtep of any importance could poſſibly be taken. The benevolence which, during the interval,

val, had been rigourouſly levied, though collected for ſuch a popular end, had produced very little money.

Whatever diſcouragement, therefore, James might receive from his violent diſputes with former parliaments, he was once more obliged to convoke this great council of the nation; and, as the Spaniſh match, which had given ſuch offence, was broken off, he fondly imagined that the commons would be now better pleaſed with his adminiſtration.*

In his ſpeech to both houſes, he ſlightly inſinuated the cauſes of complaint which he had againſt Spain; and he graciouſly condeſcended to aſk the parliament's advice, which he had ever before rejected, with regard to the management of ſo important an affair as his ſon's marriage.

Buckingham preſented, to a committee of both houſes, a long narrative, which he affirmed to be full and complete, of every ſtep taken in the treaty with Philip: but partly by concealing ſome facts, partly by miſrepreſenting others, the narrative was calculated to deceive the parliament, and to load the court of Spain with the reproach of artifice and inſincerity.

* A. D. 1624.

He alledged, that, after a negociation of many years, the king ſtill found himſelf as far from his purpoſe as ever, and that Briſtol had never brought the matter beyond general promiſes and profeſſions: that the prince, ſuſpecting the intentions of Spain, determined, at laſt, to go to Madrid, and put the matter to a final trial: that he there met with ſuch artificial dealing, as convinced him that all the ſteps taken towards the marriage, were falſe and deceitful: that the reſtoration of the Palatine, which had ever been conſidered by the king as an eſſential article, was never ſeriouſly intended by Spain: and that, after ſuffering much ill treatment, the prince was forced to return to England, without any hopes either of procuring the Infanta, or of reinſtating the Palatine in the poſſeſſion of his dominions.

This narrative, which, conſidering the importance of the ſubject, and the auguſt nature of that aſſembly to which it was preſented, deſerves great blame, was yet vouched for truth by the prince of Wales, who was preſent; and even the king ſeemed tacitly to approve it, by aſſuring the parliament that Buckingham had laid the matter before them by his expreſs order.

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The conduct of thoſe princes, it is difficult, if not impoſſible, to juſtify. 'Tis in vain to alledge the youth and inexperience of Charles; unleſs his youth, and inexperience, really led him into error, and made him give entire credit to all the impoſtures of Buckingham. And though the king was here driven from his meaſure by the impetuoſity of others; nothing ſhould have tempted him to proſtitute his honour, and confirm the falſities, at leaſt falſe colourings, of his favourite, of which he had ſo good reaſon to entertain a ſuſpicion.

Buckingham's narrative, however ſpecious and plauſible, contained yet ſo many contradictory circumſtances, as were ſufficient to open the eyes of all judicious obſervers; but it was ſo agreeable to the bent and inclination of the parliament, that they readily received it without heſitation.

They had always expreſſed the utmoſt averſion to the Spaniſh match, which, they plainly foreſaw, would be attended with the moſt dangerous conſequences; they were greatly alarmed at the rapid progreſs of the Auſtrian arms, which ſeemed to threaten the general liberties of Europe; and they were extremely deſirous of reſtoring the Palatine to the poſſeſſion of his dominions, of which he had been ſo cruelly deprived.

Moved by all theſe conſiderations, they now adviſed the king to break off both treaties with Spain, as well that which regarded the marriage, as that for the recovery of the palatinate; and James, unable to reſiſt ſo ſtrong a combination as that of his people, his parliament, his ſon, and his favourite, was, at laſt, obliged to yeild to the torrent, and to declare in favour of hoſtile meaſures, provided he ſhould be properly ſupported.

In his ſpeech to the parliament on this occaſion, he began by lamenting his unhappy fate, that, having ſo long maintained the character of a pacific prince, he ſhould now, in his old age, be compelled to exchange the bleſſings of peace for the inevitable calamities of war. He mentioned the great and continued expence attending military preparations; and, beſides ſupplies, from time to time, as they ſhould be found neceſſary, he required a grant of ſix ſubſidies and twelve fifteenths, as a proper ſtock before the commencement of hoſtilities.

He repreſented his intolerable debts and burthens, chiefly owing to the ſums with which he had ſupplied the Palatine; but he added, that he did not inſiſt on any ſupply for his own neceſſities, and that it was ſufficient for him, if effectual proviſion was made for the honour and ſecurity of the nation.

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To prevent all ſuſpicion, he, who had ever ſtrenuouſly aſſerted his prerogative, and even ſometimes ſtretched it beyond its lawful limits, now made a moſt important conceſſion, the conſequences of which might have proved dangerous to royal authority: he voluntary offered, that the money granted ſhould be entruſted, not to his management, but to a committee of parliament, and ſhould be iſſued by them according to their diſcretion.

The commons readily embraced this offer, which, however new and unprecedented, the king's laviſh and profuſe diſpoſition rendered the more neceſſary; and they unanimouſly voted three ſubſidies and three fifteenths; reſolving to continue their ſupplies, as the exigencies of the public ſhould be found to demand.

Advantage was likewiſe taken of the preſent harmony between the king and parliament, in order to paſs the bill againſt monopolies, which had formerly been encouraged by the king, but which had miſcarried by the breach between him and the laſt houſe of commons.

This bill was expreſſed in ſuch terms, as to render it merely declarative; and all monopolies, without exception, were condemned, as inconſiſtent with law and the known liber-

liberties of the people. It was there affirmed, that every ſubject of England had an entire power to regulate his own actions according to his pleaſure, provided he did no harm to any of his fellow ſubjects; and that no prerogative of the king, no power of any magiſtrate, nothing but the ſole authority of laws, could deprive him of this unlimited freedom. The extenſion of this noble principle into all its natural and neceſſary conſequences, has, at laſt, through many ſtruggles, produced that happy and excellent conſtitution, with which the inhabitants of this iſland are now bleſſed.

The houſe of commons alſo confirmed, by a new precedent, the important power of impeachment, which, two years before, they had exerted in the caſe of chancellor Bacon, and which they had ſuffered to lie dormant for more than a century paſt, except when they employed it as the inſtrument of royal vengeance.

The earl of Middleſex had been promoted, by Buckingham's intereſt, from the rank of a London merchant, to be lord high treaſurer of England; and his great abilities and unwearied application ſeemed to render him worthy of his exalted ſtation. But having expoſed himſelf to the reſentment of his patron, by refuſing to remit

remit ſome ſums of money, during the prince's reſidence in Spain, that favourite reſolved on his deſtruction, and, by his great influence in the houſe of commons, procured an impeachment againſt him.

The king was highly diſpleaſed with this meaſure, and foretold to the prince and duke, that they would live to have their fill of parliamentary proſecutions. In a ſpeech to the parliament, he endeavoured to excuſe the conduct of Middleſex, and to alleviate the weight of the charge brought againſt him.

The accuſation, however, was ſtill ſupported by the commons; and the treaſurer was condemned by the peers, though the miſdemeanours, of which he had been guilty, were neither numerous nor important. Two preſents, of five hundred pounds a-piece, which he had received for the paſſing of two patents, compoſed the article of greateſt conſequence. His ſentence was, to be fined in fifty thouſand pounds for the king's behoof, and to undergo all the other penalties which Bacon had formerly ſuffered: but the fine was afterwards remitted by the prince, when he aſcended the throne.

The commons, encouraged by the ſucceſs of theſe meaſures, and by the preſent diſpoſition of the king, preſented an addreſs,

dreſs, requiring the ſtrict execution of the laws enacted againſt Catholics. James gave them a civil and obliging anſwer; though he declared againſt perſecution, as being a very improper means of ſuppreſſing any religion; according to the noted maxim, "that the blood of the martyrs is the ſeed "of the church."

He alſo diſapproved of too great lenity to the Catholics, and ſeemed to think a middle courſe, at once the moſt generous and the moſt prudent. He even went ſo far as to ſwear, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that he never intended to indulge theſe religioniſts with a full toleration.

A liberty of exerciſing their religion in private houſes, which he had promiſed in the Spaniſh treaty, he did not conſider as worthy of that name; and it was probably by means of this diſtinction, that he thought he had ſaved his honour. After all material buſineſs was finiſhed, the king prorogued the parliament, though not without ſome gentle hints, of the ſenſe which he entertained of their unkindneſs in not ſupplying his neceſſities.

By this time James was fully couvinced, that Buckingham had been the author, not only of the prince's journey into Spain, but likewiſe of the failure of the marriage-

riage-treaty; and though he diſſembled his reſentment, he now began to eſtrange himſelf from a man, who, by his violent and impetuous conduct, perpetually traverſed all his meaſures.

The arrival of Briſtol he impatiently expected; and it was by the advice of that miniſter, whoſe fidelity he knew, and whoſe abilities he reſpected, that he hoped to extricate himſelf from thoſe difficulties in which he was at preſent involved.

During the prince's abode in Spain, that able negociator had ever endeavoured to prevent the fatal effects of thoſe headſtrong meaſures, which were ſo eagerly purſued by Buckingham. After Charles's departure, upon the firſt ſymptons of a change of reſolution, he ſtill ventured to interpoſe with his advice, and ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on the ſincerity of the Spaniards in the conduct of the treaty,

Provoked to ſee all his ſkilful and ſucceſsful labours defeated by the unſeaſonable intruſion of an inſolent minion, he would underſtand no hints; and nothing but expreſs orders from his maſter could induce him to make that demand, which he knew would put a final period to the negociation. He was not, therefore, ſurprized to hear, that Buckingham had conceived the moſt violent

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violent animoſity againſt him, and, both in the council and parliament, had aſperſed his character with the moſt villainous inſinuations. Upon the firſt notice, he prepared for quitting Madrid; and he was introduced to the king of Spain, and the Condé duke, in order to perform the ceremonial of his departure.

Philip, by the mouth of his miniſter, expreſſed his ſorrow, that Briſtol's ſervices ſhould be ſo ill requited, and that his enemies ſhould have ſo far ſucceeded, as to be able to prejudice his maſter, and his countrymen, againſt a miniſter who had executed his duty with ſuch zeal and ability. He beſought him to take up his reſidence in Spain, rather than expoſe himſelf to the implacable reſentment of a deſperate rival, and the ungovernable fury of the miſguided populace.

He offered him every advantage of rank and fortune, to mitigate the rigours of baniſhment; and, leſt the deſertion of his native country ſhould be deemed injurious to his honour, he engaged to beſtow all theſe advantages, with a public declaration, that they were granted merely for his faithful diſcharge of the office, with which he had been intruſted. And he added, that he conſidered ſuch a conduct as of the high-

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eſt importance to his own ſervice; that all his miniſters, perceiving his regard to virtue even in a ſtranger, might be the more powerfully incited to preſerve their fidelity towards ſo juſt and munificent a maſter.

Briſtol returned his moſt grateful acknowledgements for this noble and princely offer; but begged to be excuſed for declining to accept it. He ſaid, that nothing would more contribute to juſtify all the calumnies of his enemies againſt him, than his continuing at Madrid, and his accepting honours and preferments from his Catholic majeſty; that the higheſt dignity of the Spaniſh monarchy, however valuable, would be but a poor compenſation for the loſs of his honour, which he muſt ſacrifice in order to obtain it; that he depended on his own innocence for protection againſt the malice of his enemies; and that his maſter was ſo juſt and gracious, that, however he might, for a time, be influenced by calumny, he would ſurely afford him an opportunity of clearing himſelf, and would, in the end, re-admit him into his favour and confidence.

So magnanimous an anſwer contributed ſtill farther to heighten the eſteem which Philip entertained of the Engliſh ambaſſa-

dor. He entreated him, at leaſt, to accept a preſent of ten thouſand ducats, which might be neceſſary for his ſupport, till he could diſpel the prejudices contracted againſt him; and he engaged, that this compliance ſhould for ever be kept a profound ſecret, and ſhould never reach the ears of his maſter. "There is one perſon," replied the generous Engliſhman, "who muſt neceſſarily know it: he is "the earl of Briſtol, who will certainly "diſcover it to the king of England."

It was the intereſt of Buckingham to exert his utmoſt endeavours to keep Briſtol at a diſtance from the king and the parliament; leſt the power of truth, enforced by ſo eloquent a ſpeaker, ſhould diſcloſe ſcenes, which were but barely ſuſpected by the former, and of which the latter had as yet entertained no ſuſpicion.

He applied therefore to James, and, by his policy and addreſs, procured a warrant for committing Briſtol to the Tower immediately upon his landing in England; and though that nobleman was ſoon after reſtored to his liberty, yet orders were ſent him by the king, to withdraw to his country-ſeat, and to refrain from all attendance in parliament.

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He complied with the order; but loudly demanded an opportunity of vindicating himſelf, and of laying his whole conduct before his maſter. On all occaſions, he aſſerted his own innocence, and caſt on his enemy the blame of every miſcarriage.

Buckingham, and, at his deſire, the prince, declared, that they were willing to be reconciled to Briſtol, if he would confeſs his errors and ill conduct: but that high-ſpirited nobleman diſdained to purchaſe favour at ſo dear a rate. James had the juſtice to ſay that the requiring ſuch a cruel condition was an inſtance of unparallelled tyranny: but Buckingham, with his uſual arrogance and preſumption, replied, that neither the king, the prince, nor himſelf were, as yet, convinced of Briſtol's innocence.

While the attachment of the prince to Buckingham, while the irreſolution of James, or the ſhame of changing his favourite, kept the whole court in ſuſpence and anxiety; the Spaniſh ambaſſador, Inoioſa, endeavoured to open the king's eyes, and to remove his fears by inſpiring him with fears ſtill greater and more alarming. He privately put into his hands a paper, and gave him a ſignal to read it by himſelf.

He there assured him, that he was as much a prisoner at London as ever Francis the first was at Madrid; that the prince and Buckingham had formed a conspiracy against him, and had the whole court at their devotion; that cabals were forming among the popular leaders in parliament, extremely prejudicial to his person and authority; that the scheme was to confine him to some of his hunting-seats, and to intrust Charles with the sole administration of public affairs; and that it behoved him, by one vigorous effort, to assert his independance, and to chastize those who had so long and so grossly imposed on his good-nature.

What credit James gave to this information is not known. It only appears, that he exhibited some feint signs of jealousy and distrust of Buckingham; which, however, he soon after retracted. All the public measures which he pursued, and all the alliances which he contracted, were founded on the system of enmity to the house of Austria, and of war to be undertaken for the restoration of the Palatine.

The States of the United Provinces, were at this time governed by Maurice; and that enterprizing prince, conscious that his authority would necessarily decay during peace, had,

had, on the expiration of the twelve years truce, re-commenced hoſtilities with the Spaniſh nation.

His military abilities, which were great, would have compenſated for the inferiority of his forces, had he not been oppoſed by Spinola, who commanded the Spaniſh armies; a general no leſs famous for conduct, and more renowned for vigour and activity.

In theſe circumſtances, nothing could be more agreeable to the Dutch than to hear of a rupture between James and the Catholic king; and they hoped, as well from the natural union of intereſts between them and England, as from the influence of the preſent conjuncture, that powerful ſuccours would ſoon be ſent them.

Nor were they diſappointed in their expectation: an army of ſix thouſand men was raiſed in England, and tranſported into Holland, under the command of four young noblemen, Eſſex, Oxford, Southampton, and Willoughby, who were ambitious of ſignalizing their valour in ſo popular a cauſe, and of learning military experience under ſo celebrated a captain as prince Maurice.

Senſible, as James muſt undoubtedly have been, of the extreme averſion which his ſubjects entertained to every alliance with a Catholic

family, he ſtill perſiſted in his ridiculous opinion, that his ſon would be degraded, by eſpouſing a princeſs of leſs than royal extraction. After the rupture, therefore, with Spain, nothing remained but an alliance with France; and, accordingly, he forthwith applied to that court, and demanded the princeſs Henrietta in marriage for his ſon.

This match was not attended with the ſame temptations which had entangled him ſo long in the Spaniſh negociation: the portion promiſed, was greatly inferiour; and the peaceable reſtitution of the palatinate, could not be thence expected.

But James was become apprehenſive, leſt his ſon ſhould be altogether diſappointed of a bride; and therefore, as ſoon as the Chriſtian king required, for the honour of his crown, the ſame conditions which had been granted to the Catholic monarch, he was immediately induced to comply. And as the prince, while in Spain, had given a verbal promiſe to leave to the Infanta the education of her children, till the age of thirteen, this article was here inſerted in the treaty; and to that imprudent conceſſion is generally, and perhaps juſtly, aſcribed the preſent diſtreſſed condition of his poſterity.

The

The court of England, however, it must be owned, always alledged, even in the memorials to the French court, that all the conditions which seemed to favour the Roman Catholics, were inserted in the treaty, merely with a view to amuse the pope, and that their strict execution, by an agreement with France, were secretly superseded.

During the Spanish negociation, Heidelberg and Manheim had been reduced by the Imperial forces; and Frankendale, though the garrison was entirely English, was closely invested. Upon repeated applications from James, Spain employed her good offices, and obtained a cessation of arms during eighteen months.

But as Frankendale was the only place of Frederick's ancient dominions, which remained in his possession, Ferdinand, being desirous of recalling his forces from the palatinate, and of leaving that country in a state of security, was unwilling that so important a fortress should continue in the hands of the enemy. To accomodate all disputes, it was resolved to sequester it in the hands of the Infanta, as a neutral person, with this express proviso, that, upon the expiration of the truce, it should be restored to Frederick; though peace should not, at

that

that time, be made between him and Ferdinand.

After the unexpected rupture with Spain, when James required the execution of the treaty, the Infanta offered him the immediate reſtitution of Frankendale and even granted a ſafe-conduct for the garriſon though the Spaniſh Netherlands; but there was ſome territory of the empire, which lay between her ſtate and the palatinate; and, for a paſſage over that territory, no proviſion was made. By this artifice, which, in all probability, would not have been uſed, had peace been maintained with Spain, the Palatine was entirely ſtripped of all his patrimonial dominions.

Theſe unfortunate events, however, were not ſufficient to diſcourage the Engliſh nation. It was reſolved to reconquer the palatinate; a ſtate ſituated in the heart of Germany, wholly occupied by the emperour and Bavaria, encompaſſed on all hands by powerful enemies, and cut off from all communication with England. Count Manſfeldt was engaged in the Engliſh ſervice; and an army of twelve thouſand foot, and two hundred horſe, was raiſed by a general preſs throughout the kingdom.

During the negociation with France, the miniſtry of that country had made mighty pro-

promiſes, though in general terms, not only of affording a free paſſage to the Engliſh troops, but alſo of reinforcing them with powerful ſuccours in their march towards the palatinate. The Engliſh council were ſo fooliſh as to conſider theſe profeſſions as poſitive engagements.

The troops, commanded by Mansfeldt, were embarked at Dover; but, on arriving before Calais, found that no orders were come for their admiſſion. After waiting for ſome time in vain, they directed their courſe towards Zealand; where, before any meaſures could be taken for their landing, they were ſeized with a peſtilential diſtemper, which deſtroyed one half of their number; and the other half, weakened by ſickneſs, and diſcouraged by misfortunes, appeared too ſmall a body to lead into the palatinate.

Such was the ſhameful iſſue of this wretched expedition, which reflected an eternal diſgrace on the Engliſh miniſtry, who ought to have ſtipulated, before hand, for the debarkation and paſſage of their forces; though it muſt be owned, it was the only public diſaſter, which happened to England, during the quiet and peaceable reign of James.

That

That reign was now drawing towards a close. This spring the king was seized with a tertian ague; and when comforted by his courtiers with the common proverb, that this distemper, during that season, was health for a king, he answered, that the proverb could only be applied to a young king.

After some fits, he found himself extremely reduced, and sending for the prince he exhorted him to love his wife with the most tender affection, but to take care not to be infected with the prejudices of her religion; to protect the church of England; and to do all that lay in his power to assist the unhappy family of the Palatine.

With decency and fortitude he prepared for his end; and he died on the twenty-seventh day of March, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, after having reigned over England twenty-two years and a few days, and over Scotland almost from his cradle.

The character of James, as indeed that of all men, may be best learned from the history of his life. Vanity seems to have been his ruling passion. Possessed with a high notion of his own abilities, he greedily embraced every opportunity of displaying his learning, which was extensive, and his genius, which was by no means proportionable;

nable; and hence all his ſpeeches to parliament reſemble more the harangues of a tedious and long-winded preacher, than that of an Engliſh monarch addreſſing himſelf to the great council of the nation. Impreſſed, from his earlieſt infancy, with loſty ideas of the royal prerogative, he endeavoured, through the whole courſe of his reign, to maintain it in its full vigour, and, in this attempt, he made ſome violent attacks on the liberties of his people; which, however, were always repelled with becoming ſpirit and reſolution.

Nevertheleſs, it muſt be owned, that he was endued with many virtues; but no one of them pure, or free from the contagion of the neighbouring vices. His liberality degenerated into profuſion, his learning into pedantry, his pacific diſpoſition into puſillanimity, his wiſdom into cunning, and his friendſhip into light fancy and boyiſh fondneſs.

Even in the moſt common tranſactions of life, James had an air of craft and hypocriſy, which made him paſs for a worſe man than he actually was. Half the pains he took to be thought wiſe would have made him wiſe in reality; and, by walking in the beaten paths of plain ſenſe, he might have

have hit every mark, which he missed by his doublings and shiftings.

Had he employed as much study in the knowledge of men, as he did in the knowledge of witches; had he shown himself as thorough an enemy to dissimulation, as he was to tobacco; had he discovered as much sagacity in chusing his ministers, as he did in chusing his dogs; and had he been as earnest in the duties of the cabinet as in the pursuits of the field, few princes could have been said to go to the grave with a better character than James might have claimed.

But James's capacity, though far from contemptible, was fitter to discourse on general topics, than to manage affairs of state: his intentions, though generally just, were more adapted to the conduct of private life, than to the government of kingdoms. Aukward in person, and ungainly in his manners, he was ill qualified to command respect; partial and undiscerning in his affections, he was little fitted to acquire general love. Of a feeble temper more than of a weak judgment: exposed to our ridicule from his vanity; but exempt from our hatred by his freedom from pride and cruelty.

In political courage he certainly was deficient; but even this defect was productive of the moſt happy conſequences to the nation: the people were bleſſed with a profound peace, which no war interrupted; they were enriched by an extenſive commerce, which few taxes oppreſſed: and freed from the care of foreign affairs, they had leiſure to attend to their own concerns, and to ſecure their liberties by many excellent and wiſe regulations.*

* James died at Theobald's, from whence his body was carried to Somerſet-houſe, where it reſted for ſome days, and thence conveyed to Weſtminſter-abbey, where it was interred with great funeral pomp and ſolemnity, his ſon performing the office of chief mourner on the occaſion.

By his wife, Anne of Denmark, he had ſeven children: Henry Frederic, already mentioned; Robert, who died in his infancy; Charles, who ſucceeded him on the throne: Elizabeth, married to the elector palatine; Margaret, Mary, and Sophia, who died infants. He had no illegitimate iſſue; and, what may appear ſurprizing, though he is ſaid to have been extremely fond of obſcene and immodeſt language, he never diſcovered the leaſt tendency towards a paſſion for any miſtreſs.

Though James is accuſed, and perhaps juſtly, of having entertained the deſign of eſtabliſhing an arbitrary government, certain it is, he did not know how to carry his ſcheme into execution. To allure the nobility to court; to engage them in expenſive pleaſures

or employments, which diſſipate their fortunes; to encreaſe their ſubjection to miniſters, by attendance; to weaken their authority in the country, by abſence; ſuch have ever been the arts employed by deſpotic princes.

But James had no money to ſupport a ſplendid court, or to ſatisfy the cravings of a numerous gentry and nobility. He thought too, that, by living together, they became more ſenſible of their own ſtrength, and were apt to indulge too curious reſearches into matters of government. To remedy theſe evils, he endeavoured to diſperſe them into their country-ſeats, where, he hoped, they would be more ſubmiſſive to his authority, and be leſs able to form any dangerous combinations. He was wont to be extremely earneſt with them on this head; and, according to lord Bacon, would ſometimes ſay to them: "Gentlemen, at London, you are "like ſhips in a ſea, which ſhow like nothing; but, "in your country-villages, you are like ſhips in a "river, which look like great things."

As an inſtance of the king's profuſion, it may not be amiſs to mention the following ſtory. One day, while he was converſing in the gallery at Whitehall, with ſome of his courtiers, a porter paſſed by, loaded with money, which he was carrying to the treaſury. The king obſerved, that Rich, afterwards earl of Holland, one of his handſome agreeable favourites, whiſpered ſomewhat to one ſtanding near him. Upon enquiry, he found, that Rich had ſaid, "how happy "would that money make me!" Without heſitation, James beſtowed it all upon him, though it amounted to three thouſand pounds. He added, "you think your-"ſelf happy in obtaining ſo large a ſum; but I am "more happy in having an opportunity of obliging a "worthy man, whom I love." Had James, indeed, never loved any but men of real worth and abilities, ſuch

ſuch acts of liberality would have entitled him to the character of a generous and munificent prince; but as the objects of his affection, and, by conſequence, of his generoſity, were commonly a ſet of worthleſs and inſignificant minions, he has juſtly incurred the imputation of prodigality and profuſion.

The price of corn, during this reign, and, of courſe, that of the other neceſſaries of life, was no lower, or was rather higher, than at preſent. By a proclamation of James, eſtabliſhing public magazines, whenever wheat fell below thirty-two ſhillings a quarter, Rye below eighteen, barley below ſixteen, the commiſſioners were ordered to purchaſe corn for the magazines. Theſe prices then are to be conſidered as low; though they would paſs for high by our preſent eſtimation. Butcher's meat was proportionably dear. Dr. Birch, in his life of prince Henry, informs us, that that prince made an allowance of near a groat a pound for all the beef and mutton uſed in his family.

During this and the preceding reign, England produced a number of excellent poets, ſuch as Spencer, Sidney, Donne, Shakeſpear, and Johnſon: Fairfax tranſlated Taſſo with great eaſe and elegance; and Harrington tranſlated Arioſto with tolerable accuracy: Bacon acquired immortal renown by his philoſophical writings; Cambden excelled as an antiquary and hiſtorian; and Raleigh compoſed a Hiſtory of the World, which, conſidering the circumſtances in which he wrote it, during his unhappy confinement in the Tower, does great honour to his memory. James himſelf was an author, though but of middling parts: he wrote the Baſilicon Doron; a book intitled the True Law of Free Monarchies; a Treatiſe on Witches and Apparitions; and a Commentary on the Revelations, in which he proved the pope to be anti-chriſt. In the fourteenth year of this reign, Sir Hugh Middle-

ton, a private citizen of London, supplied part of the city with excellent water, conveyed in an aqueduct from Ware in Hertfordshire, now known by the name of the New River.

What chiefly distinguishes the reign of James, is the commencement of the English colonies in America, which have now increased to such an amazing height of power and grandeur. Queen Elizabeth had done little more than given a name to the continent of Virginia; and after her planting one feeble colony, which soon decayed, that country was entirely abandoned. In 1606, Newport carried over a colony, and began a settlement; which the company established for that purpose in London and Bristol, took care to furnish with yearly supplies of provisions, utensils, and new inhabitants. About 1609, Argal discovered a shorter and more direct passage to Virginia, than had hitherto been known, and left the tract of the ancient navigators, who had first directed their course southwards to the tropic, sailed westward by means of the trade-winds, and then turned northward till they arrived at the English settlements. The same year, Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers set sail with a company of five hundred persons for Virginia. Somers, being attacked by a storm, was driven into Bermudas, and laid the foundation of a settlement in those islands.

Lord Delawar afterwards undertook the government of the English colonies: but notwithstanding all his care, assisted by supplies from James, and by money from the first lottery ever known in England, the settlement of these countries was attended with such difficulties, that, in 1614, there were not alive above four hundred men of all that had been sent thither. After supplying themselves with provisions more immediately necessary for the support of life, the

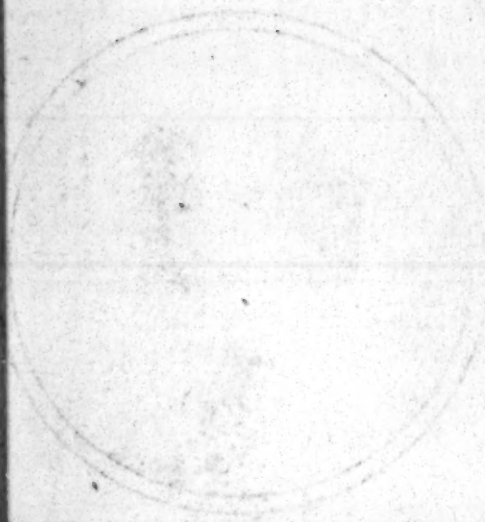
the new planters began to cultivate tobacco; and James, notwithstanding his aversion to that drug, gave them leave to enter it in England; and forbade, by a public proclamation, all importation from Spain. By degrees more colonies were planted on that continent, and gave names to the places, where they were established, leaving that of Virginia to the province first settled. The island of Barbadoes was also planted in this reign.

CHARLES I. A. D. 1625.

JAMES was ſucceeded on the throne of Britain by his only ſon Charles, now in the twenty-fifth year of his age. No ſooner were the funeral obſequies performed, than the young king diſcovered an extreme impatience to convoke the great council of the nation; and he would willingly, for the ſake of diſpatch, have convened the ſame parliament, which had ſat under his father, and which, at that time, was only prorogued.

But being informed, that this meaſure would appear unuſual, he iſſued writs for ſummoning a new parliament on the ſeventh day of May; and it was not without the utmoſt uneaſineſs, that the arrival of the princeſs Henrietta, whom he had married by proxy, obliged him to poſtpone, by repeated prorogations, their meeting till the eighteenth of June, when they aſſembled at Weſtminſter for the diſpatch of buſineſs.

Charles, in a ſhort ſpeech to both houſes, repreſented the ſituation of public affairs, the



HENRIETTA Q. of CHARLES

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CHARLES I.

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the war in which he was engaged with the king of Spain, the difficulty of reſtoring the Palatine to his dominions; and he thence inferred the neceſſity of a proportionable ſupply of money.

The commons, accordingly, took this matter into conſideration. They knew that all the money granted by the laſt parliament had been laid out on naval and military armaments; and that even the revenues of the crown were greatly anticipated. They were ſenſible, that Charles was burdened with a large debt, contracted by his father, who had borrowed money both from his own ſubjects and from foreign princes.

They were convinced by experience that the public revenues could hardly defray the neceſſary charges of government, even in times of the greateſt tranquillity. They were ſatisfied, that the war was undertaken in compliance with their own requeſt, and that they had promiſed to aſſiſt their ſovereign in carrying it on with the utmoſt vigour.

They were apprized of the difficulty of contending with the whole houſe of Auſtria; with the king of Spain, poſſeſſed of the greateſt treaſures and moſt extenſive dominions of any prince in Europe; with the emperor Ferdinand, hitherto the moſt fortunate monarch

monarch of his age, who had conquered and amazed all Germany by the rapidity of his victories.

Vigorous efforts, they saw, must be made by the English, and an obstinate offensive war be prosecuted against these mighty potentates, ere they could be compelled to part with a principality, which they had now fully conquered, and which they held in secure possession, by its being encompassed with all their other territories.

But, notwithstanding all these considerations, the commons could not be induced to grant his majesty any more than a supply of two subsidies, amounting only to about a hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

This measure, which, at first sight, appears so unaccountable, was not owing to any personal dislike, which the commons had conceived for Charles, but to other motives which it may not be improper to mention.

The duke of Buckingham was now become extremely unpopular. So vast and rapid a fortune, so little deserved, could not fail to expose him to public envy; and, however men's hatred might have been suspended for a moment, while the duke's conduct seemed to gratify the humour of the

VILLERS Duke of BUCKINGHAM.

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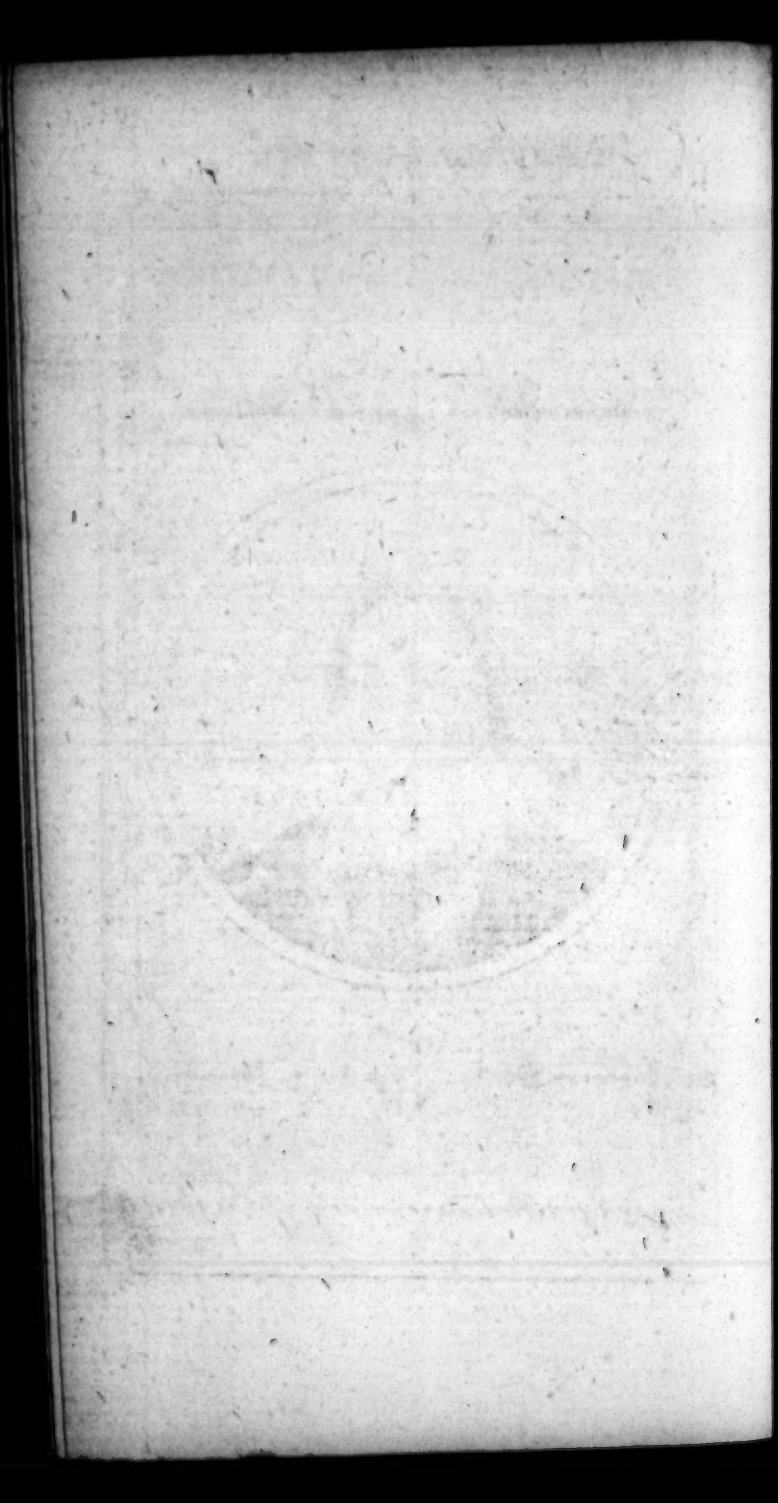

the nation, it was impoſſible for him long to retain the affections of the people.

His influence over the modeſty of Charles was even greater than that which he had obtained over the weakneſs of James; nor was any public meaſure concerted but by his counſel and advice. Impetuous in his temper, and ſudden in his reſentment, he raiſed his flatterers and dependants to the higheſt elevation of fortune, and, upon the leaſt provocation, he threw them down with the ſame fury and violence. Implacable in his hatred, and fickle in friendſhips, all men were either conſidered as his enemies, or dreaded ſoon to become ſuch. The whole power of the kingdom was graſped by his inſatiable hand; while he both poſſeſſed the entire confidence of his maſter, and enjoyed, in his own perſon, the moſt conſiderable offices of the crown.

Greatly as the ill humour of the commons was increaſed by theſe conſiderations, we are not to ſuppoſe, that they were the only motives. The Puritanical party, tho' diſguiſed, was extremely numerous, and had a powerful influence over the kingdom; and many of the leaders among the commons had ſecretly embraced the tenets of that ſect. All theſe were diſguſted with the court, both on account of the arbitrary principles which were

were there adopted, and the ſeverity exerciſed againſt them by the eſtabliſhed church.

In order to defend himſelf againſt the reſentment of James, Buckingham had affected popularity, and engaged in cabals with the Puritans; but, being ſecure of the favour of Charles, he had ſince deſerted that party; and, for that reaſon, was the object of their moſt inveterate hatred.

The match with France too, and the articles in favour of the Catholics, which were ſuppoſed to be in the treaty, were great cauſes of diſguſt to the whole nation; though it muſt be allowed, that the alliance with France was much leſs diſagreeable, than that formerly projected with Spain, and was therefore received rather with pleaſure than diſſatisfaction.

All theſe cauſes were greatly increaſed by another motive of ſtill greater moment. The houſe of commons, it is known, were almoſt entirely governed by a ſet of men of the moſt diſtinguiſhed abilities, and the moſt generous ſentiments, who were formed into a regular party, and cloſely united, as well by determined aims and purpoſes, as by the hardſhips, which ſome of them had ſuffered in proſecution of their ſchemes. Of theſe the moſt celebrated were, Sir Edward Coke, Sir Edwin Sandys,

Sir

Sir Robert Philips, Sir Francis Seymour, Sir Dudley Digges, Sir John Elliot, Sir Thomas Wentworth, Mr. Selden, Mr. Pym.

Inſpired with an ardent love of liberty, theſe noble patriots ſaw, with regret, an unlimited power uſurped by the crown, and were determined to ſeize the opportunity which the king's neceſſities afforded them, of circumſcribing the prerogative within more reaſonable bounds. Though their anceſtors had blindly ſubmitted to practices and precedents favourable to royal authority, and had yet been able to maintain ſome remains of liberty; it would be impoſſible, they thought, when all theſe pretenſions were methodized and reduced into a regular ſyſtem, to preſerve even the appearance of freedom, in oppoſition to ſuch unlimited power of the ſovereign.

It was neceſſary to fix a choice; either to abandon entirely the privileges of the people; or to entrench them with more firm and exact barriers than the conſtitution had hitherto provided for them. In a queſtion of ſo much importance, men of ſuch exalted ſentiments and ſuch independent fortunes could not long heſitate: they boldly embraced the ſide of free-

freedom, and determined to grant no supplies to their indigent prince, without extorting conceſſions in favour of civil liberty.

The end they conſidered as generous and noble: the means as regular and conſtitutional. To grant or refuſe ſupplies was the undoubted right of the commons: and as all human governments, eſpecially thoſe of a mixed nature, are ſubject to continual change; it was as natural, in their opinion, and as lawful for popular aſſemblies, to avail themſelves of favourable incidents, in order to enlarge the liberties of the people; as for monarchs, in order to extend their own authority.

But, juſt as this reaſoning might be in itſelf, and natural as it might appear to the country-party, it is not to be ſuppoſed that Charles would entertain the ſame ſentiments. Strongly prepoſſeſſed in favour of the duke, whom he had heard ſo highly extolled in parliament, he could not conceive the reaſon of ſo ſudden a change in their opinions. And when the war, which had been undertaken at their own requeſt, was, at laſt, begun, the immediate deſertion of their ſovereign could not but ſeem very ſtrange and unaccountable.

Even

Even, though no other motive had been ſuſpected, the refuſal of a ſupply, in ſuch a ſituation, muſt naturally have the appearance of cruelty and deceit; but when he found that it was owing to a ſettled deſign of circumſcribing his authority, he failed not to conſider theſe views as highly criminal and traiterous.

Thoſe lofty ideas of monarchical power, which were ſo prevalent in that age, and which were ſo much countenanced by the unſettled nature of the Engliſh conſtitution, were firmly rivetted in the mind of Charles; and however moderate in his temper, the natural ſuggeſtions of ſelf-love, joined to the numerous precedents in favour of prerogative, had made him believe his political tenets to be altogether certain and unqueſtionable.

Taught, from his infancy, to conſider even the ancient laws and conſtitution more as lines to point out his duty, than barriers to oppoſe his power; an attempt to form new ramparts, in order to reſtrain his authority, appeared but one degree removed from open ſedition and rebellion.

So criminal in his eyes was ſuch a deſign, that he ſeems even unwilling to aſcribe it to the commons: and though he was obliged, on account of the plague,

which had lately broke out in London, to adjourn the parliament, he immediately reaſſembled them at Oxford, and endeavoured anew to obtain from them ſome ſupply in his preſent neceſſity.

Charles now found it neceſſary to be more full and explicit, than he had formerly been. By himſelf, or his miniſters, he gave a particular detail both of the alliances which he had formed, and of the military operations which he had concerted.

He told the parliament, that by a promiſe of ſubſidies, he had prevailed on the king of Denmark to embark in the war; that that monarch intended to enter Germany by the north, and to ſtir up to war thoſe princes who earneſtly wiſhed for an opportunity to vindicate the liberty of the empire; that Mansfeldt had engaged to march, with an Engliſh army, into the palatinate, and, by that quarter, to arouſe the members of the Evangelical union; that the ſtates muſt be aſſiſted in the unequal conteſt which they maintained with Spain; that no leſs a ſum than ſeven hundred thouſand pounds a year was found, by calculation, neceſſary for all theſe purpoſes; that the maintenance of the fleet, and the defence of Ireland, required an annual expence of four hundred thouſand pounds;

that

Plague in 1665.

Hulett Sculp

Engraved for Rider's History of England

that he himſelf had already expended his whole revenue in the public ſervice, and had ſcarce left ſufficient for the ſupport of himſelf and of his family; that on his acceſſion to the throne, he found a debt of three hundred thouſand pounds, contracted by his father, in aſſiſting the Palatine; and that, while prince of Wales, he had himſelf, notwithſtanding his great œconomy, contracted debts to the amount of ſeventy thouſand pounds, which he had laid out entirely on naval and military armaments.

After repreſenting all theſe facts, the king even condeſcended to uſe entreaties. He ſaid, that this was the firſt requeſt which he had ever made them; that he was young, and unexperienced, and in the beginning of his reign; and if he met with kind and civil treatment it would endear to him the uſe of parliaments, and would, for ever, eſtabliſh a good underſtanding between him and his people.

But Charles's arbitrary principles appear, even in ſome meaſure, to have blinded his judgment. While he meant to beg, he ſeemed to threaten. By declaring, that civil treatment would endear to him the uſe of parliaments, he might be ſuppoſed to inſinuate, that harſh treatment would eſtrange him from theſe popular aſſemblies, and perhaps

induce him to discontinue them entirely: a power, which, however desirous he might be to usurp, the commons were, by no means, willing to allow him.

Notwithstanding this imprudence, and perhaps it was nothing more, some members, favourable to the court, proposed an addition of two fifteenths to their former supply; but the majority were determined to make no farther concessions. Besides all their other causes of disgust, the commons had made a new discovery, which incensed them still more against the court and the duke of Buckingham.

When James abandoned the Spanish alliance, and solicited that of France, he had engaged to supply Lewis, who was entirely destitute of naval force, with one ship of war, and seven armed vessels, hired from the merchants; and these the French court pretended they meant to employ against the Genoese, who, being firm and useful allies to the Spanish monarchy, were, on that account, obnoxious both to the king of France and England.

When this squadron, by Charles's order, arrived at Dieppe, it appeared that it was intended to serve against Rochelle. The sailors were enraged at this deception: they framed a remonstrance; and signing all their

their names in a circle, to prevent the diſcovery of the ringleaders, they laid it under the prayer-book of Pennington, their commander.

Pennington declared, that he would rather be hanged in England for diſobedience, than embrue his hands in the blood of his brother Proteſtants in France. The whole fleet returned immediately to the Downs. There they received freſh orders from Buckingham, lord admiral, to ſail back to Dieppe. As the duke was ſenſible, that authority alone was not ſufficient, he made uſe of many arts and ſubtilities to perſuade them to obedience; and, by the help of a report which was artfully propagated, that peace had been made between the French king and the Hugonots, he at laſt carried his point.

When they arrived at Dieppe, they found that they had again been deceived. Sir Ferdinando Gorges, who commanded one of the veſſels, broke through and returned to England; and all the officers and ſailors of all the other ſhips, notwithſtanding great offers made them by the French, immediately deſerted.

The houſe of commons were no ſooner apprized of theſe tranſactions, than they expreſſed the higheſt indignation at the perfidy

and inſincerity of the court, and wreaked their vengeance upon the Catholics in England. They inſiſted on a vigorous execution of the penal law enacted againſt the profeſſors of that religion, and remonſtrated ſeverely againſt ſome late pardons which had been granted to prieſts. They attacked Montague, one of the king's chaplains, who had wrote a book which ſeemed to favour the church of Rome; and they petitioned his majeſty for reſtoring ſuch able clergymen as had been ſilenced for want of conformity to the ceremonies.

The king, provoked at theſe vigorous proceedings, and diſpairing of all hopes of ſupply, immediately deſolved the parliament, on pretence of the plague, which had begun to appear at Oxford.

To ſupply the want of parliamentry aids, he iſſued privy ſeals for borrowing from his ſubjects. The advantage, derived from this levy, was but a poor compenſation for the odium with which it was attended. By means, however, of that ſupply, and by ſome other expedients, he was, at laſt, enabled to fit out his fleet.

It conſiſted of eighty veſſels, and had on board ten regiments of infantry. Sir Edward Cecil, lately promoted to the title of viſcount Wimbleton, was appointed commander.

mander. He ſteered directly for Cadiz, and found the bay crowded with Spaniſh ſhips of great value. He either neglected to attack theſe ſhips, or made the attempt with little prudence. The army was landed, and a ſmall fort taken; but the raw ſoldiers, finding plenty of wine, indulged themſelves in ſuch exceſſes as produced univerſal confuſion.

Farther ſtay being deemed fruitleſs, they were re-embarked; and the fleet put to ſea, with a deſign of intercepting the Spaniſh galleons. But the plague having crept in among the ſoldiers and ſailors, they were obliged to give up all hopes of this prize, and return to England without having performed any action of importance. Loud complaints were raiſed againſt the court, for committing a command of ſo much conſequence to a man like Cecil, who, by his conduct in this expedition, had ſhewn himſelf unqualified for ſuch a truſt.

Charles, having miſſed ſo rich a prize, was again obliged to have recourſe to parliament. Though his authority was weakened by the miſcarriage of his enterprizes, and the imprudence of the Spaniſh war became every day more apparent; though his growing neceſſities encreaſed his dependence, and made him leſs able to withſtand

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the encroachments of the commons; he was determined to try, once more, that regular and conſtitutional method of ſupply.*

Perhaps too, he truſted, in ſome meaſure, to a little political art, which he put in practice. He named four of the moſt popular leaders, ſheriffs of counties; Sir Edward Coke, Sir Robert Philips, Sir Thomas Wentworth, and Sir Francis Seymour: and though this queſtion had been formerly much diſputed, he imagined that he had, by that means, rendered them incapable of being choſen members.

But this deſign, being well known, ſerved only to make the commons exert themſelves with the greater vigour. A ſufficient number of patriots was ſtill left to purſue the plan which had formerly been concerted; and the weakneſs of the court could not more evidently appear, than by its being reduced to ſo ineffectual an expedient, in order to obtain an influence over the houſe.

The maxims, therefore, of the laſt parliament, were immediately embraced; as if the ſame men had been every where choſen, and no time had elapſed ſince their laſt meeting. When

* A. D. 1626.

When the king repreſented his neceſſities to the houſe, and demanded a ſupply, they immediately voted him three ſubſidies and three fifteenths; to which they afterwards added one ſubſidy more. By this they meant to ſhow him, that they were ſufficiently diſpoſed to ſupport him in the proſecution of the war; provided he was equally willing to redreſs the grievances of the nation: and, to convince him that this was the only condition upon which he could expect any aſſiſtance, they confined themſelves to the voting the ſupply, and reſerved the paſſing that vote into a law, till towards the end of the ſeſſion.

The duke of Buckingham, formerly ſo unpopular, became every day more odious, as well on account of his haughty and arrogant behaviour, as of the unbounded influence which he had obtained over his maſter. Two violent attacks he ſuſtained this ſeſſion; one from the earl of Briſtol, another from the houſe of commons.

As long as James lived, Briſtol, ſecure of the ſecret favour of that monarch, behaved with great duty and ſubmiſſion; in hopes, that an opportunity would ſometime occur of regaining his former credit and authority. Nor did he entirely deſpair, even after the acceſſion of Charles. In obedience to the king's

king's order he continued at his country-ſeat, and refrained from attending in parliament. Many attempts he made to recover the good opinion of his maſter; but finding them all ineffectual, and perceiving Charles to be entirely ruled by Buckingham, his inveterate enemy, he determined no longer to keep any meaſures with the court.

When the parliament was ſummoned, Charles, by a ſtretch of prerogative, had ordered, that no writ, as uſual, ſhould be ſent to Briſtol. That nobleman preſented a petition to the lords; and entreated their good offices with the king for obtaining what was his due as a peer of the realm.

His writ was accordingly ſent him; but accompanied with a letter from the lord-keeper Coventry, forbiding him, in the king's name, to attend in parliament. This letter Briſtol tranſmitted to the lords; and begged their advice with regard to his conduct in ſo delicate a matter. The king's prohibition was ſuperſeded, and Briſtol took his ſeat in the houſe.

Enraged at theſe repeated inſtances of courage, which the court called contumacy, Charles cauſed his attorney-general to prefer an impeachment of high-treaſon againſt Briſtol. In return Briſtol accuſed Buckingham of high treaſon.

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The earl's defence of himself and accusation of the duke are both extant; and, together with some original letters, which are likewise preserved, exhibit the clearest and most distinct view of all the negociations with Spain. From the whole it appears, that the duke had been guilty of many acts of folly and presumption; but it would be difficult to collect thence any action, which in the eye of the law could be held a crime; much less could convict him of high-treason.

The impeachment of the commons was still less dangerous to the duke, if it be examined by the standard of law and equity. The house, after having voted, upon the queries of Dr. Turner, "that common fame was a sufficient ground of "accusation by the commons," proceeded to draw up a set of articles against Buckingham.

They accused him of having engrossed many offices in his person; of having bought two of him; of neglecting to guard the seas, insomuch that many merchant-ships had been taken by the enemy; of furnishing ships to the French king, in order to serve against the Hugonots; of being concerned in the sale of honours and offices; of procuring extensive

grants

grants from the crown; of obtaining many titles of honour for his kindred; and of giving physic to the late king without the knowledge of his physicians. All these articles appear, from a careful comparison of the charge and reply, to be either frivolous, or false, or both.

The only article of importance was, that he had compelled the East-India compa- to pay him the sum of ten thousand pounds; that he had confiscated some goods belonging to French merchants, on pretence of their being the property of Spanish. The trial was never brought to full conclusion; so that it is difficult for us to form any distinct opinion with regard to these articles: but it must be acknowledged, that the duke's answer, in these particulars, as in all the rest, is abundantly clear and satisfactory.

While the commons were thus carrying on their prosecution against Buckingham, the king seemed desirous of taking every opportunity, by which he could discover his contempt and disregard for them. The earl of Suffolk, chancellor of the university of Cambridge, being lately dead, Buckingham, though lying under impeachment, was yet, by means of court-interest, elected in his place. The commons exclaimed against

gainſt this indignity; and the more to encreaſe them, Charles was ſo imprudent as to write, with his own hand, a letter to the univerſity, commending the duke, and thanking them for their choice.

The lord keeper, in the king's name, prohibited the houſe expreſly from touching his miniſter and ſervant, Buckingham; and commanded them to finiſh, in a few days, the bill, which they had begun for the ſubſidies, otherwiſe they muſt expect to be immediately diſſolved. And though Buckingham endeavoured, a few days afterwards, to ſoften the rigour of theſe harſh commands by a plauſible and ſpecious oration, the impreſſion which they made, was not ſo eaſily effaced.

Beſides a more imperious ſtyle, which Charles employed to this parliament, than to the laſt, he had the folly, and even preſumption, in one of his meſſages, to threaten the commons, that, if they did not furniſh him with ſupplies, he would be forced to try new councils.

This language was but too clear: yet, leſt any doubt ſhould remain, Sir Dudley Carleton, vice-chamberlain, took care to explain it. "I pray you conſider," ſaid he, "what theſe new councils are, or "may be. I fear to declare thoſe that

" I conceive. In all Chriſtian kingdoms, " you know, parliaments were in uſe an- " ciently, by which thoſe kingdoms were " governed in a moſt flouriſhing manner, " until the monarchs began to know their " own ſtrength, and ſeeing the turbulent " ſpirit of their parliaments, at length " they, by little and little, began to ſtand " on their prerogative, and, at laſt, over- " turned the parliaments throughout Chriſt- " endom, except here with us only. Let us " be careful then to preſerve the king's " good opinion of parliaments, which " bringeth ſuch happineſs to this nation, " and makes us envied of all others, " while there is this ſweetneſs between " his majeſty and the commons; leſt we " loſe the repute of a free people by our " turbulency in parliament."

This inſolent, though concealed, menace inflamed the reſentment, but did not appal the courage of the commons; a precarious liberty, they thought, which was to be preſerved by unbounded compliance, was no more than another name for ſlavery. They therefore reſolved, while it was yet in their power, to ſecure the conſtitution by ſuch impregnable barriers, that no king or miniſter, for the future, ſhould ever dare, with impunity, to uſe ſuch

ſuch language to any parliament, or even to entertain ſuch a deſign againſt them.

Two members af the houſe, Sir Dudley Diggs and Sir John Elliot, who had acted as managers of the impeachment againſt Buckingham, were committed to priſon. The commons immediately declared, that they would deſiſt from all farther buſineſs, until ſatisfaction ſhould be given them for this violation of their privileges.

Charles alledged, in excuſe, that theſe miniſters, in their accuſation of the duke, had dropped ſome ſeditious expreſſions. Upon enquiry, it appeared, that no ſuch expreſſions had been uſed. The members were diſmiſſed; and the king gained no other advantage by this attempt, than to ſhew his arbitrary diſpoſition, and expoſe himſelf ſtill more to the reſentment of the commons.

Encouraged by this example, the lords reſolved to aſſert their privileges, and demanded the enlargement of the earl of Arundel, who had lately been committed to the Tower. After many fruitleſs evaſions, the king, though with great reluctance, was at laſt obliged to grant their requeſt. And by this incident the peers diſcovered, that, however averſe to popular

courſes, they were fully determined to maintain their own dignity.

The king had promiſed to the laſt parliament a redreſs of all religious grievances; but he was weak enough to imagine, that, unleſs the commons complied with all his demands, he was freed from the obligation of performing his engagements. The commons therefore reſolved to put him in mind of his promiſe: they accordingly claimed the execution of the penal laws enacted againſt Catholics; and they preſented to him a liſt of perſons, inveſted with offices, who were either convicted or ſuſpected recuſants.

By this ſtep too, they meant to throw a new odium upon Buckingham. His mother, who had great influence over him, was a profeſſed Catholic: his wife was ſuppoſed to be infected with the ſame prejudices; and the indulgence given to Catholics was, of conſequence, thought to be entirely owing to his credit and authority.

The next attack made by the commons, had it ſucceeded would have given a ſevere blow to the royal prerogative. They were forming a remonſtrance againſt the practice of levying tonnage and poundage without conſent of parliament. This article,

article, together with the new duties laid on merchandize, compoſed near a half of the crown-revenues; and by ſtripping the king of theſe reſources, they would have reduced him to a total dependance on his ſubjects.

While they retained ſuch a valuable pledge, beſides the ſupply already voted, they were ſure that nothing could be denied them. Though after examining the matter near three months, they found it impoſſible to convict the duke of any legal crime; they juſtly conſidered him as a very unable and even dangerous miniſter; and they intended to preſent a petition, which would then have been equal to a command, for removing him from his majeſty's perſon and councils for ever.

The king, informed of theſe vigorous proceedings, immediately determined to diſſolve the parliament. When this reſolution was known, the peers, who had all along behaved with great ſubmiſſion to his majeſty, endeavoured to employ their good offices: and they intreated him to allow the parliament to ſit ſome time longer. "Not a "moment longer," cried the king haſtily; and he ſoon after concluded the ſeſſion by a diſſolution.

As this measure had been expected, the commons took care to finish and disperse their remonstrance, which, they hoped, would be sufficient to justify their conduct to the people. The king likewise, on his part, published a declaration, explaining the reasons of his disagreement with the parliament, and their sudden dissolution, before they had time to bring any business to a final conclusion.

These papers furnished ample matter of controversy and dispute to the partizans on both sides, who, by their mutual altercations, were inflamed against each other to the highest degree of rancour and animosity.

The new councils, which Charles had hinted to the parliament, were now to be tried, in order to supply his necessities. A commission was granted to compound with the Catholics, and agree for a dispensation with the penal laws which had been passed against them. By this measure, the king, at once, replenished his coffers, gratified his inclination of indulging these recusants, and mortified the puritans, whom he mortally hated, but he could not possibly have employed any branch of prerogative, which would have given greater umbrage to the nation.

From

From the nobility he begged aſſiſtance: from the city of London he demanded a loan of an hundred thouſand pounds. The former contributed ſlowly: the latter, after many ſhifts and evaſions, gave him a flat refuſal.

In order to fit out a fleet, all the maritime towns were commanded, by an order of council, to equip a certain number of veſſels. The city of London was rated at twenty ſhips. This is the firſt inſtance in Charles's reign of ſhip-money; a taxation, which had been impoſed by Elizabeth, but which afterwards, being puſhed ſome ſteps higher, by Charles, occaſioned ſuch violent murmurs. Of ſome, loans were demanded; of others, a benevolence was required; methods, countenanced by precedents, but always diſagreeable even in times of the greateſt and moſt imminent danger.

Theſe methods of ſupply, however unconſtitutional, were purſued with ſome moderation; till news were brought, that the king of Denmark was defeated by count Tilly, the Imperial general, in a general and deciſive action. Money was now more neceſſary than ever, in order to repair ſo great a diſaſter, and to ſupport a prince, who had embarked in the war, merely

merely in compliance with the requeſt of the Engliſh monarch.

After ſome conſultaion, an act of council was paſſed, importing, that as the preſent neceſſity allowed not time for convoking a parliament, the moſt ſpeedy, equal, and convenient method of ſupply was by a general loan from the ſubject, according as every man was aſſeſſed in the rolls of the laſt parliament.

The ſame ſum was demanded, which each would have paid, had the vote of four ſubſidies been paſſed into a law: but care was taken to acquaint the public, that the ſums required were not to be called ſubſidies but loans. Had not the people been formerly convinced, that forced loans were an infringement of liberty, and muſt, of courſe, ſuperſede the uſe of parliaments, this was the moſt proper method of giving them the neceſſary information.

The commiſſioners, appointed for levying theſe loans, among other articles of ſecret inſtructions, received the following injunction; "if any ſhall refuſe to lend, and ſhall "make delays and excuſes, and perſiſt in "his obſtinacy, you ſhall examine him "upon oath whether he has been dealt "with to deny or refuſe to lend, or

"make

"make an excuſe for not lending; "who has dealt with him, and what "ſpeeches and perſuaſions were uſed to "that purpoſe. And you ſhall alſo charge "every ſuch perſon in his majeſty's name, "upon his allegiance, not to reveal to "any one what his anſwer was." The ridiculous nature of this inquiſitorial power, ſo impoſſible to be put in practice, was the object of indignation, and even, in ſome meaſure, of ridicule: and when men reflected on the ſtupidity of the projectors, they were leſs apt to dread the effect of their arbitrary principles.

That religious prejudices might ſupport civil tyranny, ſermons were preached by Sibthorpe and Manwaring, in behalf of the general loan; and the court took care to diſperſe them over the kingdom. Paſſive obedience was there inculcated in its full extent; the whole authority of the ſtate was repreſented as belonging to the king alone, and all reſtrictions of laws and conſtitutions were condemned as ſeditious and impious. So eagerly was this doctrine embraced by the king, that archbiſhop Abbot, a learned and virtuous prelate, becauſe he refuſed to licence Sibthorpe's ſermon, was ſuſpended from the exerciſe of his

his office, baniſhed from London, and confined to one of his country ſeats.

But theſe united efforts of prieſtly and royal authority, were not able to ſubdue the independent ſpirit of the people. Throughout all England, many refuſed theſe loans, and ſome were even active in diſſuading their neighbours from complying with ſuch an illegal impoſition.

By warrant of council, all the recuſants were committed to priſon. Moſt of them, with patience, bore their confinement, or preſented petitions to the king, who commonly diſmiſſed them. Five gentlemen alone, Sir Thomas Darnel, Sir John Corbet, Sir Walter Earl, Sir John Hevingham, and Sir Edmund Hampden, had the noble and patriotic courage, at their own hazard and expence, to defend their liberties, and to demand enlargement, not as a favour from the court, but as their right by the laws of their country.

No particular cauſe was aſſigned for their impriſonment: the warrant alone of the king and council was alledged; and it was affirmed, that, by law, this was not a ſufficient reaſon for refuſing bail or enlargement to the priſoners.

This queſtion was brought to a ſolemn trial in the court of king's bench; and the

eyes

eyes of the whole nation were fixed upon the iſſue of a cauſe, in which every individual was ſo deeply intereſted.*

From the debates on this ſubject, it appeared that the Engliſh parliaments had been ſo jealous of perſonal liberty, as to ſecure it againſt the encroachments of arbitraby power, by no leſs than ſix ſeveral ſtatutes, and even by an article of the *Magna Charta* itſelf, the moſt ſacred foundation of the laws and conſtitution.

Theſe, however, the ſovereign had frequently ventured to elude, in times of public danger, either during a foreign invaſion, or domeſtic inſurrection, by committing to cuſtody ſuch factious and turbulent perſons, as were ſuſpected of treaſonable deſigns; nor had his power, in this reſpect, been ever called in queſtion; becauſe he had never preſumed to exerciſe it without the moſt apparent neceſſity. But as no ſuch neceſſity could be pleaded at preſent, it was thought impoſſible that the judges could ever give a deciſion in favour of this ſtretch of arbitrary power, ſo contrary to the expreſs letter of the law, and the genius of the conſtitution.

This

* A. D. 1627.

This, indeed, was a ſtep, which, though they had been garbled for the purpoſe, and were entirely under the influence of the court they could not be induced to take: they contented themſelves with ſimply remanding the gentlemen to their priſons, and refuſing the bail which was offered.

Heath, the attorney-general, propoſed that the court ſhould enter a general judgement, that no bail could be granted upon a commitment by the king or council. But the judges wiſely rejected his propoſal. The people, they ſaw, were already incenſed to the higheſt degree; and loud complaints prevailed every where, as if the kingdom were reduced to ſlavery: and the moſt dangerous prerogative of the crown, it was ſaid, the power of impriſoning the ſubject, is here, openly and ſolemnly, exerted for the moſt dangerous purpoſe; that of extorting loans, or rather ſubſidies, without conſent of parliament.

Great as was this grievance, it was not the only one of which the nation had then reaſon to complain. The troops which had ſerved in the fruitleſs expedition to Cadiz, were diſperſed through the kingdom; and money was levied upon the counties, to defray the expence of their quarters. The ſoldiers were billetted upon private houſes, con-

contrary to cuſtom, which required, that in all ordinary caſes, they ſhould be quartered in inns and public houſes: and all thoſe, who had declined or deferred the payment of the loan, were ſure to be burdened with a good number of theſe dangerous and diſorderly gueſts.

Many too, of low ſtations, who had diſcovered a refractory diſpoſition, were impreſſed into the ſervice, and obliged to ſerve in the fleet or army. For the ſame reaſon, Sir Peter Hayman was ſent on an errand into the palatinate; and Glanville, an eminent lawyer, had been forced, during the former interval of parliament, to accept of an office in the navy.

While Charles thus, by his arbitrary meaſures, incurred the reſentment of his own ſubjects, it was matter of ſurprize to all men of ſenſe, that, foiled as he was in every attempt againſt the Auſtrian dominions, and deſtitute of any treaſure but what he extorted by the moſt odious and unpopular meaſures; as if the half of Europe, now his enemy, was not ſufficient to employ his military proweſs; he ſhould wantonly attack France, the other great kingdom in his neighbourhood; and embark, at once, in a war againſt thoſe two powers, whoſe intereſts had hitherto been deemed ſo irre-

 concileable,

concileable, that they could never, it was thought, agree either in the same friendships or enmities.

All contemporary historians, both foreign and domestic, impute to Buckingham this war with France, and represent him as influenced by motives which would appear incredible, were not the extreme violence and temerity of his character sufficient to warrant almost any assertion.

At the time when Charles espoused, by proxy, the princess Henrietta, the Duke of Buckingham was sent over to France, in order to assist at the nuptials, and convey the new queen into England,

The eyes of the whole French court were turned towards a man who had possessed the unbounded confidence of two successive monarchs, and who, from a private station, had raised himself, in the earliest youth, to the absolute government of three kingdoms.

The beauty of his person, the gracefulness of his air, the splendour of his equipage, his fine taste in dress, festivals, and carousals, all contributed to heighten the prepossessions conceived in his favour: the affability of his behaviour, the politeness of his address, the magnificence of his entertainments, augmented still farther the general admiration which was paid him.

All

All buſineſs being already finiſhed, the time was wholly employed in mirth and diverſions; and as this was a ſphere in which the duke was perfectly qualified to excel, he recommended himſelf ſtill more to that gay and ſuperficial people.

But his great ſucceſs at Paris, was attended with as fatal conſequences as his miſcarriage at Madrid. Intoxicated with the favour of the court, he had the preſumption to carry his ambitious addreſſes to the queen-mother herſelf; and he is even ſaid to have made an impreſſion on the tender heart of that princeſs. Certain it is, he was ſo confident of her favourable inclinations, that, after his departure, he ſecretly returned under ſome pretence, and, paying her a viſit, was diſmiſſed with a reproof, which ſeemed to have more in it of kindneſs than of anger.

Intelligence of this intrigue was ſoon given to Richlieu, who now bore an unlimited ſway in the French court. The vigilance of that miniſter was here farther awakened by jealouſy. He too, either from vanity or politics, had ventured to make his addreſſes to the queen. But a prieſt, in the decline of life, of a ſevere character, and engaged in the moſt extenſive plans of ambition or vengeance, was but ill qualified to cope, in

ſuch a conteſt, with a young courtier, entirely devoted to gallantry and pleaſure.

The cardinal's diſappointment prompted him the more ſtrongly to defeat the amorous projects of his rival. When the duke was preparing for a new embaſſy to Paris, he received a meſſage from Lewis, importing, that he muſt lay aſide all thoughts of ſuch a journey. In a romantic paſſion, he ſwore, "that he would ſee the queen, in "ſpite of the whole power of France:" and, from that moment, he reſolved to excite a war between the two nations.

Availing himſelf of ſome diſguſts which had been conceived againſt the queen's attendants, he perſuaded Charles to diſmiſs, at once, all her French ſervants, in violation of the articles of the marriage-treaty. He permitted, and even encouraged, the Engliſh ſhips of war, and privateers, to intercept veſſels belonging to French merchants, and he immediately condemned them as lawful prizes.

Perceiving, however, that all theſe injuries were only followed by complaints and remonſtrances, or at moſt repriſals, on the part of France; he determined to ſupport the intrigues of the duke Soubize, and to engage at once in a military expedition againſt that nation.

Sou-

Soubize, who, with his brother, the duke of Rohan, was the head of the Hugonot party, was at that time in London, and earneſtly importuned Charles to undertake the protection of theſe diſtreſſed Proteſtants.

He affirmed, that, after the inhabitants of Rochelle had been reduced by the united ſquadrons of England and Holland, after peace was made with the French king under the mediation of Charles, the ambitious cardinal was ſtill plotting the deſtruction of the Hugonots; that meaſures were ſecretly taking in every province of France, for the ſuppreſſion of their religion; that forts were built, in order to overawe Rochelle, the moſt conſiderable bulwark of the Proteſtants; that the reformed in France turned their eyes towards Charles as the defender of their faith, and regarded him as a prince engaged by intereſt, as well as inclination, to aſſiſt them; that, ſo long as their party was preſerved, Charles might depend upon their obedience, as much as on that of his own ſubjects; but if they were once deprived of their liberties, the power of France, freed from this check, would become formidable to England, and to all the neighbouring nations.

Though Charles, in all probability, bore no good will to the Hugonots, who ſo much reſembled the Puritans, whom he mortally hated; he yet ſuffered himſelf to be overcome by theſe arguments, ſeconded by the importunities of Buckingham. A fleet of an hundred ſail, and an army of ſeven thouſand men, were equipped for the invaſion of France, and the command of both committed to the duke, who was totally ignorant both of land and ſea ſervice.

The fleet arrived before Rochelle; but ſo little foreſight had the duke diſcovered, that the inhabitants of that city ſhut their gates, and refuſed to admit allies, of whoſe coming they were not previouſly apprized. All his other military operations were equally imprudent and unſucceſsful. Inſtead of invading Oleron, a fertile and defenceleſs iſland, he directed his courſe to the iſle of Rhé, which was ſupplied with a good garriſon, and ſtrongly fortified.

Having landed his men, though with ſome loſs, he purſued not the blow; but allowed Toiras, the French governor, five days reſpite; during which, St. Martin was furniſhed with ſtore of proviſions, and put in a poſture of defence.

He

He left behind him the ſmall fort of Prie, which could at firſt have made no oppoſition: though determined to ſtarve St. Martin, he was ſo careleſs in guarding the ſea, that plenty of proviſion and ammunition were thrown into it: deſpairing of being able to reduce it by famine, he aſſaulted it without having made any breach, and raſhly, as well as cruelly, threw away the lives of his ſoldiers.

Underſtanding that a French army had ſtolen over in ſmall bodies, and landed at Prie, the fort which he had at firſt neglected, he began to think of a retreat; but made it with ſo little judgment, that it was equal to a total defeat. He was the laſt of the whole army that embarked; and he returned to England, having loſt two-thirds of his men, totally diſgraced both as an admiral and a general; and bringing no praiſe with him, but that of having ſhown his perſonal courage and intrepidity.

The ſhameful miſcarriage of this expedition, contributed ſtill farther to inflame the ill-humour of the people.* Their liberties, they believed, were deſtroyed; illegal taxes impoſed; their commerce, which had ſuffered ſo ſeverely by the Spaniſh, was totally ruined

* A. D. 1628.

ruined by the French war; that military glory which had been transmitted to them from their ancestors, had received a grievous stain by two ill-conducted and unsuccessful enterprizes; scarce a noble family but mourned, from the last of them, the loss of a son or a brother; greater calamities were apprehended from the war with these powerful monarchs, co-operating with the domestic disorders under which the nation laboured; and all these misfortunes were imputed to the obstinacy of Charles, in following the councils of Buckingham; a man, who, neither by his birth, age, services, or merit, could have any title to that unbounded authority which he now possessed.

It is not to be supposed, that, in these circumstances, the king and the duke would be very desirous of convoking a parliament: but so little able were they to procure the means of executing their military enterprizes, that they found themselves obliged to have recourse to that disagreeable expedient.

The money raised, or rather extorted, under pretence of prerogative, had amounted to a very considerable sum, and had produced such murmurs in the nation, that it seemed dangerous to repeat the experiment. The urgency of affairs, it was imagined, would

would induce the commons to grant a ſupply; and having felt the bad effects of their former obſtinacy, they would probably behave with greater temper and moderation.

The more to ſooth them, it was agreed, by Sir Robert Cotton's advice, that Buckingham ſhould be the firſt perſon who ſhould propoſe, in the council, the aſſembling a new parliament. Having laid in this ſtock of merit, he hoped that all his former faults would be excuſed and pardoned, and that, inſtead of a tyrant and oppreſſor, he ſhould be conſidered as the firſt patriot in the kingdom.

The views of the popular leaders were more rational and profound. When the commons met, they appeared to be men of the ſame generous ſentiments with their predeceſſors, and poſſeſſed of ſuch wealth, that their property was ſuppoſed to be three times greater than that of the houſe of peers; they were returned by burroughs and counties, enraged, all of them, at the late violations of liberty; many of the members themſelves had been thrown into priſon, and had ſuffered the utmoſt ſeverities: yet, notwithſtanding all theſe circumſtances, which might have induced them to purſue violent meaſures, they entered

tered upon buſineſs with the moſt perfect temper and decorum.

They knew, that the king, diſſatisfied with theſe popular aſſemblies, and ſtrongly prejudiced againſt their privileges, wanted but a plauſible pretext to aboliſh the inſtitution, and would greedily lay hold of the firſt opportunity which any incident, or undutiful behaviour of the houſe, ſhould afford him.

Of this truth, indeed, they were ſoon convinced, by the firſt ſpeech of his majeſty, in which he told them, that, "if they "ſhould not do their duties, in contri- "buting to the neceſſities of the ſtate, he "muſt, in diſcharge of his conſcience, "make uſe of thoſe means which provi- "dence had put into his hands, in order to "to ſave that which the follies of ſome "particular men may otherwiſe put in dan- "ger. Take not this for a threatning," added he, "for I ſcorn to threaten any "but my equals; but as an admonition "from him, who, by nature and duty, has "moſt care of your preſervation and proſpe- "rity."

The lord-keeper, by the king's order, ſubjoined, "this way of parliamentary ſup- "plies, as his majeſty told you, he hath "choſen, not as the only way, but as the "fitteſt;

" fitteſt; not becauſe he is deſtitute of " others, but becauſe it is moſt agreeable to " the goodneſs of his own gracious diſpoſi- " tion, and to the deſire and will of his " people; if this be deferred, neceſſity and " the ſword of the enemy may make way " to the others. Remember his majeſty's " admonition; I ſay, remember it."

Notwithſtanding theſe inſolent menaces, for they deſerve no better name, the commons reſolved to proceed with the utmoſt calmneſs and moderation, in redreſſing the grievances of the public, in reſtraining the exerciſe of arbitary power, in fixing the limits of the royal prerogative, and ſecuring the rights and privileges of the people.

Sir Francis Seymour ſaid, " This is the " great council of the nation, and here, with " certainty, if not here only, his majeſty " may ſee, as in a true glaſs, the ſtate of " the kingdom. We are all called hither " by his writs, in order to give him faith- " full counſel; ſuch as may ſtand with his " honour: and this we muſt do without " flattery. We are ſent hither by the " people, in order to repreſent their juſt " grievances: and this we muſt do, with- " out fear. Let us not imitate the judges " of Cambyſes, who, when their approba- " tion was aſked to ſome illegal meaſure,

" ſaid,

" ſaid, that, though there was a written " law, the Perſian kings might follow " their own will and pleaſure. This " was baſe flattery; more worthy of our re- " proof than of our imitation: and as fear, " ſo flattery, blindeth the judgment. For my " part, I ſhall ſhun both, and ſpeak my " mind with as much duty, as any man, to " his majeſty, without neglecting the inte- " reſt of the public

" But how can we expreſs our affections, " while we retain our fears; or ſpeak of " giving, till we know whether we have " any thing to give. For if his majeſty " may take what he will, what need we " give?

" That this hath been done, is evident " from the quartering of ſoldiers, a thing " of no advantage to the king's ſervice, " and an intolerable burthen to the ſub- " ject: by the impriſonment of gentlemen " for refuſing the loan, who, if they had " paid it from the motive of fear, had been " as blameable as the projectors of that " oppreſſive meaſure.

" To juſtify theſe proceedings, hath it " not been preached, or rather prated, in " the pulpit, that all we have is the king's " by divine right. But when preachers " forſake their calling, and turn ignorant

" ſtateſ-

" ſtateſmen; we ſee how willing they are " to exchange a good conſcience for a biſ- " hopric.

" He, I muſt own, is no good ſubject, " who would not willingly lay down his " life, when, by that ſacrifice, he might " promote the intereſt of his ſovereign and " of the commonwealth. But he is not a " good ſubject, he is a ſlave, who will ſuf- " fer his goods to be taken from him a- " gainſt his will, and his liberty againſt " the laws of the kingdom.

" By oppoſing th[illegible] practices, we ſhall " but tread in the ſteps of our forefathers, " who ſtill preferred the public before their " private intereſt, nay, before their very " lives. It will in us be a wrong done to " ourſelves, to our poſterities, to our con- " ſciences, if we forego this claim and pre- " tenſion."

" I read of a cuſtom," ſaid Sir Robert Philips, " among the old Romans, that " once every year they held a ſolemn feſti- " val; during which their ſlaves were per- " mitted, without fear, to ſpeak what they " pleaſed, in order to eaſe their afflicted " minds; and, on the concluſion of the " feſtival, the ſlaves ſeverally returned to " their former ſervitudes.

" This inſtitution may, with ſome diſ-
" tinction, well ſet forth our preſent ſtate
" and condition. After the revolution of
" ſome time, and the grievous ſufferance of
" many violent oppreſſions, we have, now
" at laſt, as thoſe ſlaves, obtained, for a
" day, ſome liberty of ſpeech: but ſhall
" not, I truſt, be hereafter ſlaves: for we
" were born free. Yet, what new illegal
" burthens our eſtates and perſons have
" groaned under, my heart yearns to think
" of, my tongue falters to utter. The
" grievances, by which we are oppreſſed, I
" draw under two heads: acts of power
" againſt law, and the judgment of law-
" yers againſt our liberty."

After mentioning three illegal judgments, paſſed within his memory; that by which the Scots, born after James's acceſſion, were entitled to all the privileges of Engliſh ſubjects; that by which the new impoſitions were eſtabliſhed; and the laſt, by which arbitrary impriſonments were authorized; he thus proceeded:

" I can live, though another, who has
" no right, be put to live along with me;
" nay, I can live, though burthened with
" impoſitions, beyond what I at preſent
" bear: but to have my liberty, which is
" the ſoul of my life, raviſhed from me;

" to

" to have my perſon pent up in a jail,
" without relief from law, and to be ſo ad-
" judged: O improvident anceſtors! O
" unwiſe forefathers! to be ſo curious in
" providing for the ſecurity of our lands
" and the liberties of parliament; and, at
" the ſame time, to neglect our perſonal
" liberty, and let us lie in priſon, and that
" during pleaſure, without redreſs or reme-
" dy! If this be law, why do we talk of
" liberties? Why trouble ourſelves with diſ-
" putes about a conſtitution, franchiſes,
" property of goods, and the like? What
" may any man call his own, if not the li-
" berty of his perſon? I am weary of tread-
" ing theſe ways; and therefore conclude
" to have a ſelect committee appointed, in
" order to draw up a petition to his majeſty
" for redreſs of theſe grievances. And this
" petition, being read, examined, and ap-
" proved, may be preſented to the king;
" of whoſe gracious anſwer we have no
" reaſon to doubt, our deſires being ſo juſt,
" our intentions ſo loyal, and the manner
" ſo dutiful. Neither need it be feared,
" that this is the critical parliament, as has
" been hinted; or that this is a way to diſ-
" traction: but aſſure ourſelves of a happy
" iſſue. Then ſhall the king, as he calls

" us his great council, find us his true coun-
" cil, and own us his good council."

Sir Thomas Wentworth ſpoke to the ſame purpoſe. After inveighing againſt projectors and ill miniſters of ſtate: " theſe," ſaid he, " have introduced a privy council,
" raviſhing, at once, the ſpheres of all an-
" cient government; deſtroying all liberty;
" impriſoning us without bail or bond.
" They have taken from us——what ſhall
" I ſay? Indeed, what have they left us?
" By tearing up the roots of all property,
" they have taken from us every means of
" ſupplying his majeſty, and of ingratiat-
" ing ourſelves by voluntary proofs of our
" duty and attachment to him.

" To the repairing of all theſe breaches,
" I ſhall apply myſelf; and to all theſe diſ-
" eaſes, ſhall propoſe a remedy. By one,
" and the ſame thing, have the king and
" the people been hurt, and by the ſame
" muſt they be cured. We muſt vindicate:
" What? New things? No: our ancient,
" legal, and vital liberties; by re-enforcing
" the laws enacted by our anceſtors; by
" ſetting ſuch a ſtamp upon them, that no
" licentious ſpirit ſhall dare for the future
" to infringe them. And ſhall we think
" this a way to break a parliament? No:
" our deſires are modeſt and juſt. I ſpeak

" both

"both for the intereſt of the king and the "people. If we enjoy not theſe rights, it "will be impoſſible for us to relieve him. "Let us never, therefore, doubt of a fa- "vourable reception from his majeſty."

This propoſal was unanimouſly approved by the whole houſe, and a bill was paſſed, without oppoſition, againſt arbitrary impriſonments and forced loans.

They then proceeded to the buſineſs of ſupply; and, in order to convince his majeſty that they were ſufficiently diſpoſed to relieve his neceſſities, provided he would gratify them in their juſt demands, they voted him no leſs than five entire ſubſidies; a ſum with which Charles declared himſelf to be very well ſatisfied; and even tears of gratitude ſtarted in his eyes, when he was informed of this conceſſion.

The ſupply, however, though voted, was not as yet paſſed into a law; and the commons determined to employ the interval in providing ſome barriers to their rights and liberties, ſo lately infringed. They were ſenſible that their own vote, declaring the illegality of the former meaſures, was not of itſelf ſufficient to ſecure their privileges againſt all future invaſion. Some act to that purpoſe muſt receive the ſanction of the whole legiſlature; and they named a com-

mittee to prepare the form of so important a law.

Forced loans, benevolences, taxes without consent of parliament, arbitrary imprisonments, billetting soldiers, and martial law; these were the grievances of which the nation complained, and against these an eternal remedy was to be provided.

The commons aspired not, as they declared, to any new or unusual privileges: they only aimed at securing those which had been transmitted to them from their ancestors: and this law they determined to call a *Petition of Right*; thereby intimating, that it contained only a corroboration or explanation of their ancient privileges, not any infringement of royal prerogative, or acquisition of new liberties.

The peers, who, though, during the whole of these violent struggles, they observed, on the main, a laudable impartiality, were yet, as is natural, somewhat prejudiced in favour of monarchy, began to apprehend that the commons would go too far in their projected petition; and they therefore proposed the plan of one more moderate, which they recommended to the consideration of the other house.

It contained merely a general declaration, that the great charter, and the six statutes, by

by which it was explained, remained ſtill in force to all intents and purpoſes; that, by virtue of the charter and the ſtatutes, and by the tenour of the ancient cuſtoms and laws of the land, every ſubject has a fundamental property in his goods, and a fundamental liberty of his perſon; that his property and liberty are as perfect and entire at preſent, as during any former period of the Engliſh government; that, in all common caſes, the common law ought to be the rule of their proceedings: "and in caſe that, "for the ſecurity of his majeſty's perſon, "the general ſafety of the people, or the "peaceable government of the kingdom, "the king ſhall find juſt cauſe, for reaſons "of ſtate, to impriſon or reſtrain any man's "perſon; he ſhould be petitioned graci-"ouſly to declare, that, within a *conve-"nient* time, he ſhall and will expreſs the "cauſe of the commitment or reſtraint, "either general or ſpecial, and, upon a "cauſe ſo expreſſed, will leave the priſoner "immediately to be tried according to the "common law of the land."

The commons, however, were by no means ſatisfied with this plan: they clearly perceived, that the general declaration was of no avail, and that the latter clauſe left their liberties even in a worſe condition than

than before: they therefore proceeded with great eagerneſs in drawing up the form of a petition, which ſhould contain expreſſions more accurate and diſtinct, and more favourable to public liberty.

The king was no ſooner informed of the intention of the commons, than he employed every expedient in order to divert them from their reſolution. He ſent a meſſage to the two houſes, in which he deſired them, "clearly to let him know, "whether they will truſt to his royal pro- "miſe for the ſecurity of their liberties; "which promiſe he had given at ſeveral "times, and chiefly by the lord-keeper's "ſpeech made in his own preſence. If "they truſt to it, he aſſured them it ſhould "be really and royally performed."

This propoſal is a clear proof not only of Charles's arbitrary principles, but even, in ſome meaſure, of his weakneſs; to think that the commons could be ſo fooliſh as to truſt to his promiſe, for the ſafety of their lives, their liberties, and fortunes.

Secretary Coke, who delivered this meſſage, after ſome preamble, and ſome apology for paſt grievances, expreſſed himſelf in theſe terms: "when means were de- "nied his majeſty, being a young king, "and newly come to the throne, which "he

" he has found engaged in a war; what " could we expect in theſe neceſſities? his " majeſty has convened this parliament to " repair the breach: his majeſty aſſures us, " that we ſhall not have like cauſe to " complain: he aſſures us, that the laws " ſhall be ſtrictly executed. What can " we deſire more? but you will ſay, that " we ought to provide for poſterity, and " prevent the like for the future. Were " not the ſame means provided by them " before us? what can we do more?

" We ſtand, at preſent, on the confines " between the privilege of the ſubject and " the prerogative of the king. I hope " that we ſhall not pretend to add any " thing to ourſelves, in order to depreſs " him. I will not divine: yet I think, " that in ſuch pretenſions, we ſhall meet " with oppoſition from the king, nay, " perhaps, from the lords. For my own " part, I ſhall not, as counſellor to his " majeſty, give any opinion, which I will " not openly declare and juſtify, here, or " at the council-board.

" Will we, in this neceſſity, ſtrive to " bring ourſelves into a better condition " and greater liberty than our fathers en- " joyed, and reduce the crown to a worſe " than ever? I dare not adviſe his ma-

" jeſty

" jesty to agree to such measures. What " we now desire, if it be no innovation, " is all contained in those acts and sta- " tutes; and whatever more we shall de- " mand is a diminution of the king's " power, and an addition to our own. We " deal with a wise and valiant prince, who " hath the sword in his hand for our good; " and this good cannot be attained with- " out power.

" Think not, that, by parliamentary de- " bates, or even by clauses of statutes, " we can render that unlawful, which, by " experience, we have found to be de- " rived from necessity, and from a ne- " cessity so urgent, that it allows not a " remedy from any law.——And I be- " seech you to consider, whether those, " who have filled the same place which I " now possess, have not frequently given " warrants for imprisonment; and yet no " doubt has been entertained, nor any " complaint made by the subject."

This speech occasioned a warm debate in the house; and many arguments were advanced on both sides of the question: but Sir Thomas Wentworth reconciled all parties, by saying, " that never house of com- " mons, so far as conerned themselves, had " greater confidence than the present, in " the

"the goodneſs of their ſovereign: but we "all are ambitious," ſaid he, "that his "majeſty's goodneſs ſhould deſcend to poſte- "rity, and we are accountable for a public "truſt. There hath been a public viola- "tion of the laws, by the king's miniſters; "and nothing can ſatisfy the nation, but a "public reparation. Our deſire to ſecure "the ſubject's right by bill, will carry us no "farther than what is contained in former "laws, with ſome modeſt proviſion for in- "ſtruction, performance, and execution." Theſe ſentiments were ſo agreeable to the whole houſe, that the ſecretary was deſired to conſider them as an anſwer to his meſ- ſage.

The king, however, did not deſiſt from his purpoſe. He ſtill endeavoured, by another meſſage, to elude the petition of the commons. He there confeſſed his former errors, and engaged, that, for the future, no juſt cauſe of complaint ſhould be given. And he added, "that the affairs "of the kingdom were ſo urgent, that he "could not continue the ſeſſion above a "week or two longer: and that, if the "houſe ſhould not be ready, by that time, "to do what was fit for themſelves, it "ſhould be their own fault."

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In another message, he asked them, "Why demand explanations, if you doubt "not the performance of the statutes, ac- "cording to their true meaning? explana- "tions will endanger the prerogative. "And it may be well said, what occasion "for a new law to confirm an old one, if "you trust to the declarations which his "majesty made to both houses?"

MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

End of the TWENTY-SECOND VOLUME.